

ISSUE #52
March/April
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HEAVEN'S METAL

Your Hard Music Authority

sometime sunday

ALSO

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argyle park
walter eugenes

michael roe
david
benson

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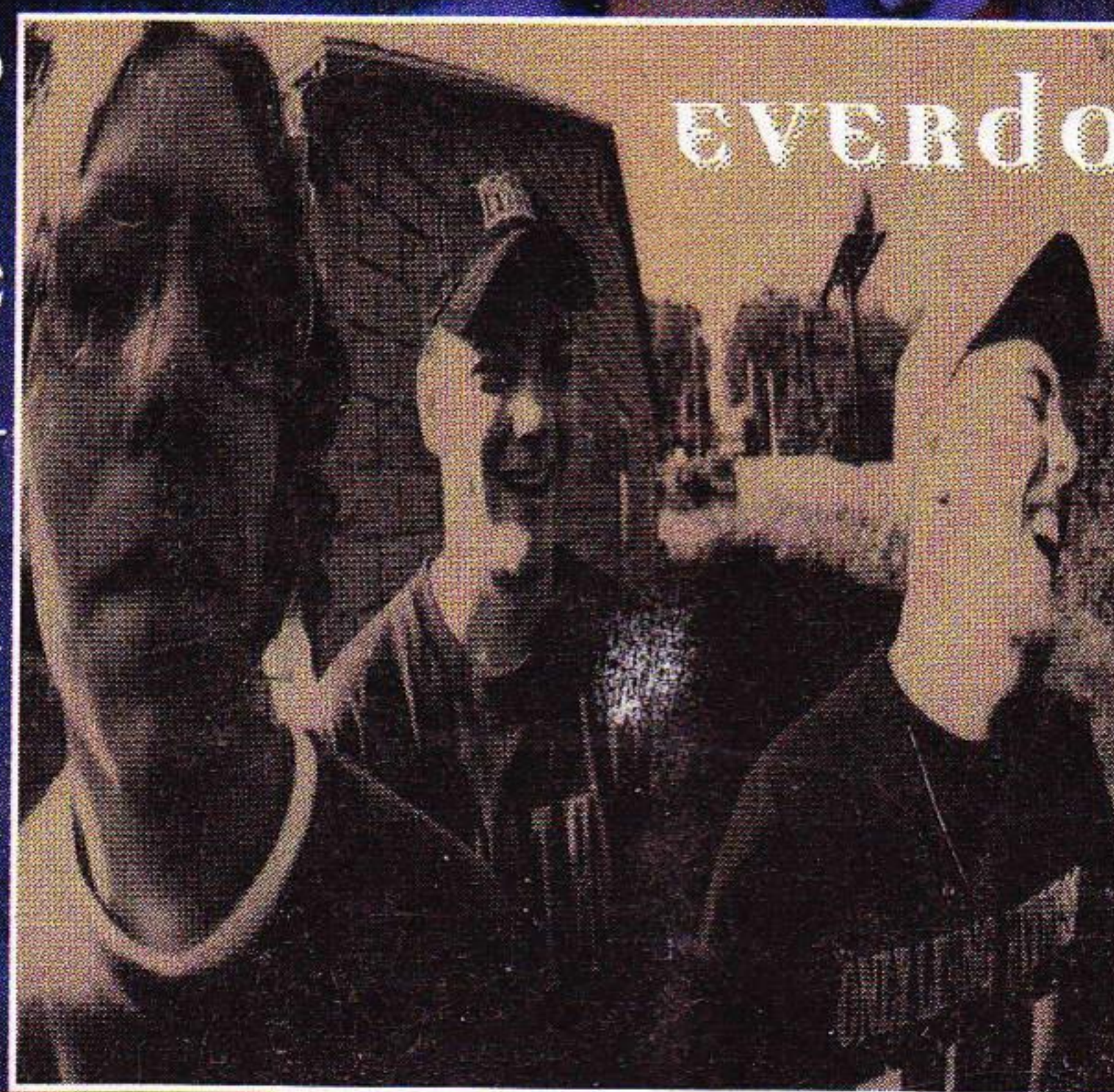
ARTIST BOOK REVIEWS

profile: RAD ROCKER'S

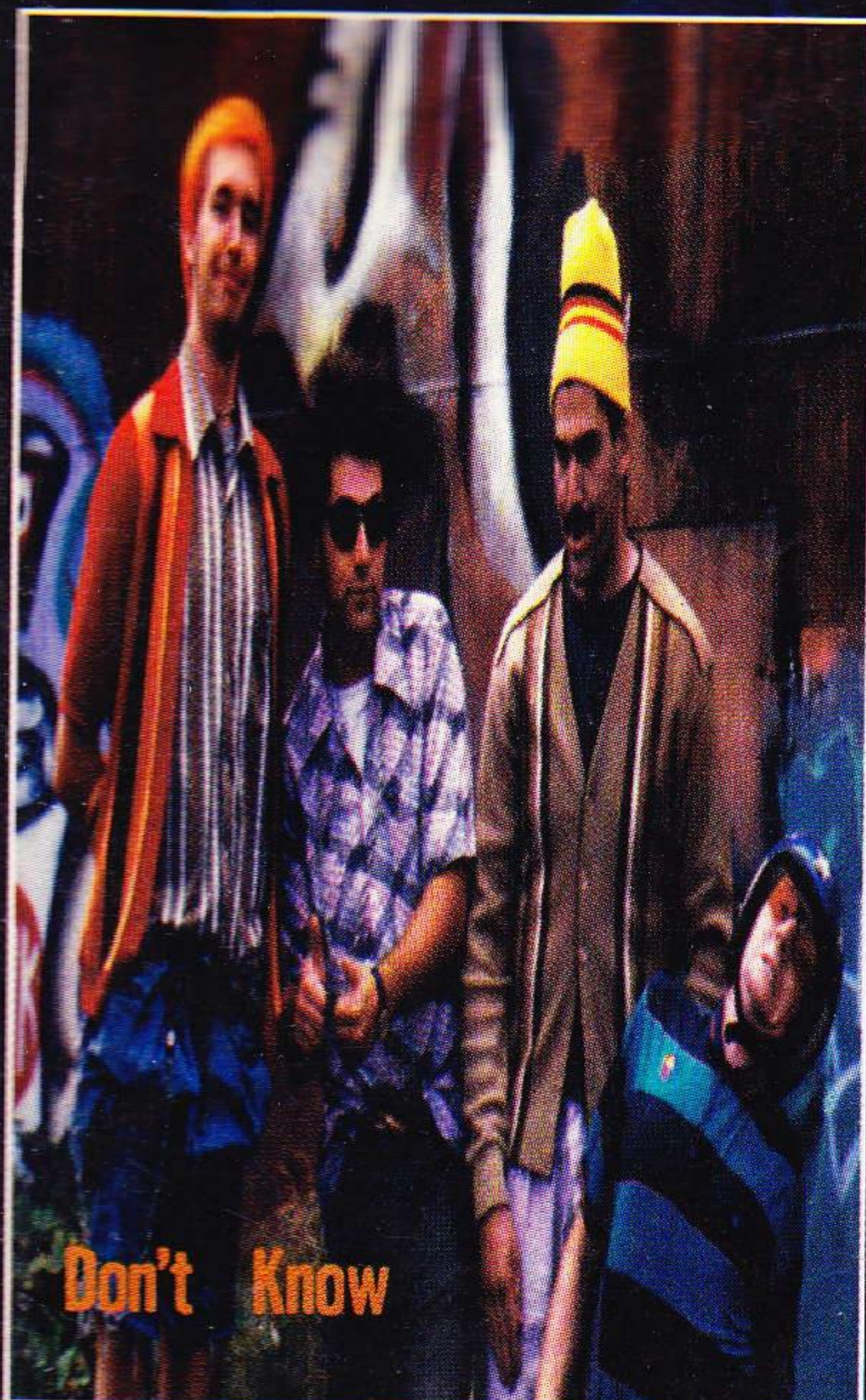
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HEAVEN'S METAL

YOUR HARD MUSIC AUTHORITY

March/April '95

Issue #52

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METAL**

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Scripture

"He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not." (Isaiah 53:3)

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MEGA MAIL!

After reading the interview with Nick Menza from Megadeth, I got this cool idea: You guys should send the people you do the "What So & So Sez" a few copies of Heaven's Metal as, like, a follow-up ministry. I think guys like Nick need to see that God is more than just whatever or what you make Him up to be, and the Focused article brought that out loud and clear. I am sure that Nick and others would be impressed with the dedication of bands like Focused!

--Aaron Harrison

Conestoga, Pennsylvania

(ED -- It is our policy to, whenever we can, send copies of HM to every artist that's interviewed, and usually their press agents, too.)

PRAISE GOD!

You probably won't print this, but oh well. First, I want to thank you. You see, a while ago, I used to listen to all kinds of evil, satanic music, like Slayer, Death, Dead Kennedys, etc. But then one day, when I was reading Rip, I noticed an ad about Christian metal, so I sent away for your mag. Then, when I got it, I started reading it, thinking it was going to be slow music. I noticed a Living Sacrifice interview, so I went out and bought their CD. I listened to it and was blown away by its heaviness. Then I started buying other Christian music and was influenced. I am now a proud subscriber of Heaven's Metal and a major Christian. I also play the guitar and hope one day I, too, will become a Christian metal singer.

Dave Braun

Baltimore, Maryland

SAVIOUR MACHINE M.I.A.?

I have not seen anything about the band Saviour Machine in your pages lately, and was wondering why. I really love this band and think they are awesome, but I have not heard anything about them for a long time. I saw them twice back in November ('93) on tour with Deliverance. They said that they were going to have a new album probably out in May. I know that artists very rarely make these promised dates for album releases, but I haven't heard another thing about the album. Could you please find out something about the band's status? I hope they haven't broken up or

something, but I guess it is better to find out now than to keep on wondering.

I was also wondering why HM didn't go to the Michigan Mosh Thrash Bash Slam Jam Hardcore Spring Thing. Even though not many people showed up, the bands were awesome. If this festival gets off the ground, I believe it will be one of the best ones of the year. Let's pray that the promoters can get another festival together for next year.

--Daniel Forsberg

Greenville, Illinois

(ED -- Check out the review of *Saviour Machine II* in our Album Reviews section this issue. As you can tell by ads, the Michigan Mosh Fest is happening again this year!)

FRESH METAL

I am a big fan of your ministry. I think it has brought Christian music to a new group of kids. I have read Heaven's Metal for about two years and I love the progress! First of all, I'd like to thank you for keeping pictures of Christian artists with secular band merchandise in your magazine. I listen to both Christian and secular music, and it is encouraging that these musicians that I look up to enjoy good music without being afraid of the way people think of them.

I enjoyed Issue #49 greatly. I am a big fan of punk rock and I am glad that there is finally some other Christian punks out there. There aren't many Christians where I live, and there's even fewer punks, so finding a Christian punk is rare. The article with The Crucified was the greatest! Being a long-time fan of The Crucified, I was disappointed to see them break up, but I'm glad that God has a new calling for them. In fact, if it wasn't for the encouragement I got from listening to the song, "Path To Sorrow," I don't know if I'd be around anymore. The interview with Brandon Ebel was great! Tooth & Nail is the greatest label out. I've got all their releases. I can't wait for Blenderhead and MxPx to come out.

I have two suggestions: A while back, you did an article called "Fresh Metal." This was really good. It made me aware of new groups coming out. You might want to try this again. Also, being such a hardcore punk fan, could you do an article about punk music?

--gNate Tape

Mandeville, Louisiana

A STATE OF CONTROL

I am writing in response to Daniel Ortman's letter. In that letter, he had trouble finding the Barren Cross CD, *State of Control*. Well, I may have a solution. Try going to a mainstream record store (Disc Jockey, Blockbuster, Camelot, Cat's, etc.). These stores have machines called "Muze," which is basically a public music catalog. Type in "Barren Cross," and all three albums should appear. Restless Records have picked up the Barren Cross CD's. I got mine in about a week. Ask the clerk for assistance.

--John Easter

Johnson City, Tennessee

(ED -- You also might try Rad Rocker's for those rare and out-of-print albums. See their ad in this issue.)

WORSHIP AT LESS VOLUME?

I really appreciate all the spiritual food available through your magazine to a people who, as a whole, may not necessarily receive it by regular means. Excuse the grammatical "encryption." I can't write anything without it coming out like a creative writing paper or something. Anyway, a much needed ministry, Heaven's Metal contains some great stuff. The teaching columns especially. I kind of see music as candy, you know. At least for myself. And I really see metal as very sweet candy. In other words, really deeply worshipping the Lord is much more important to me than being able to groove on some killer chunk. Not that it is bad. It's just like the food thing. We need to eat our dinner first. And you provide encouragement in that area.

I recognize that many are ministered to very heavily by very heavy music. For myself, my spirit is touched more easily by the music of Keith Green than by Tourniquet, whose new album is beyond exceptional. I mean, the production is incredible! The drum sound, especially -

- so crisp and dominant. That snare sound is outrageous. Off track? Sorry. Anyway, I find that, for myself, metal seems to feed my flesh more than my spirit.

What am I saying? My point, I guess, is that we metalheads need some spiritual nourishment to go with our candy, and Heaven's Metal provides just that. Thank you. Keep up the great work.

--Paul Singleton

Roseburg, Oregon

NON-TOXIC

Praise God that there are people out in the real world willing to deal with issues facing today's young people! I am glad you are here. I sense God calling me to begin a ministry to meet emotional, psychological and spiritual needs involved with the changes wrought by adolescence. Today our young people are encouraged, tempted, and sought out to accept and try every disgusting thing the Bible defines as sin. Non-Toxic is ready to stand in the gap and love this rebellious and forsaken generation.

Non-Toxic is an evangelical Christian outreach that is set in the atmosphere of a dry bar pool hall. The first Non-Toxic, thus far, opened in Edgerton, WI, but my vision is to expand to other communities in Southern Wisconsin and Northern Illinois. We will open 20 Non-Toxic facilities by the year 2000.

We are planning to open a 10,000 sq. ft. facility in Janesville, WI by May of 1995. There will be 8 pool tables, 4 foosball tables, 4 electronic dart boards, air hockey tables, restaurant service, and a concert stage. We expect to book the best and most serious Christian bands. Your magazine will help me to discern, as well as I can, the state of certain groups as well as the state of Christian music. Do you know of any magazine that deals with Christian rap music? I want to stay abreast on that area also.

--Dave Flood

Edgerton, Wisconsin

(ED -- There's a magazine called

Heaven's Hip-Hop, which covers the Christian rap scene. In case you're wondering, however, even though the name is similar, HM and Heaven's Hip-Hop are not affiliated -- save for our relationship as fellow servants of Christ. You can reach them at: 201 W. Stassney Lane, Ste 510, Austin, TX 78745.)

RICKY DON'T LOSE THAT NUMBER!

This is the first magazine I have ever subscribed to that is worth every penny of the price! I did get a scare a couple weeks ago, and I was wondering if you could ease my fear a little. I hadn't received the July/August issue (since received, thanks!), and it was the end of August. So I called the phone number in the inside cover (of issue #45), and some sleepy dude answered and said Heaven's Metal had gone out of business and he had the old phone number!

Needless to say, I went into shock and denial! (The first and second steps in the 10 step plan?) Then I received the new Sept./Oct. issue and it seems that everything is cool. Did you guys get a new phone number? If I could afford it, I would send you guys some extra money to help out, but I'm college bound and I can't swing it right now. I love the posters in the center of the mag, but do have one request: could we see more Bride, Fear Not, Tamplin, Magdalen, and Whitecross posters? It seems that every centerfold is of Mortification! A fine band, just not one of my favs. Thanks for the Tim Bushong picture! Lovewar rules! I also am a big fan of "What So & So Sez." It's a great way to minister to these guys. I would love to see a "What Collective Soul Sez." I just got their album and I think they are Christians.

I could go on and on about how much more I like Heaven's Metal than anything I've ever read, but let's just say that if I ever go homeless, I will still scrape up enough money on the streets to stay a subscriber!

--Josh Viste

Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin

YOUNG GEEZERS

By Jeff Swenson



TOUGHER THAN STONE!

By Andrew Crump

"We went down to L.A. and got to play Mortal's last show -- their last two shows, actually. I heard through the grapevine that some people call us 'Sometime Christian.'"

Mikee's raspy laughter immediately filled my speaker phone hundreds of miles away. "That is so lame. These people probably don't even know me; they probably don't know my band. That's going to go on, I guess, whenever you do something that people don't understand."

But, Sometime Sunday is a band that should be easily understood. With a frontman like Mikee who tells you

exactly what he's thinking and a debut album (*Stone*) that hides nothing musically or lyrically, it would seem to take an idiot not to grasp what makes the band tick. Don't fear, though, because Mikee has a way of cutting through the clutter that surrounds the personality of Sometime Sunday as well as its musical aspirations.

"Some woman asked me for (Sometime Sunday's) statement of purpose, or doctrine, or whatever you want to call it. And I told her two words: Seek Jesus. That's it. It's not, 'Well,

PHOTO: MATT WIGNALL

we believe this, and you should be baptized, and you can't do this and you can't do that.' No, it has nothing to do with that! And people still can't get that through their heads. I've been a Christian for 21 years, and I'm so sick of people telling me that all these rules are what's going on. That is not true.

"God is excited to be our Father. He loves us. My kid (Shayde) cries her brains out, and I don't understand why sometimes. She does something wrong and I get upset and mad, but I love her so much. I would do anything for her. I would die for her. That's the way God is with us. He's excited to have us as his children. The condemnation thing can just take a hike. And, if people don't understand that, they should be seeking a little more. There is way too much going on for people not to understand that we are chosen, that we are special. There's always going to be somebody out there who doesn't understand that. That's the bad part

about it."

Fuel for the controversial fire that burns around Sometime Sunday as well as the frustration flames that blaze from Mikee's mouth more than likely have been drawn from rumors that Mikee smokes and cussed in a recent issue of the underground zine Thief In The Night. Mikee shared that he quit smoking a few months ago, and he did not hide the fact that he used profanity in the article. "If somebody was around me, and they were cussing -- that doesn't bug me. When they start rippin' somebody down -- now that bugs me.

"There's way too many people that are dying, because they just don't know Christ for me to sit here and say, 'Oh, you're wrong and you're bad for smoking. Oh, you're wrong and you're bad because you said a cuss word.' And that's a total personal opinion. If somebody doesn't agree with me, that's fine.

"Someone said to me the other day that I was giving

somebody a total freedom to go and do whatever they want. No, it's not that way at all. We're called to be judgmental in a way. I believe that. If it says in the Bible that you cannot have a homosexual relationship, and my Christian brother becomes a homosexual, I want to talk to him and say, 'Hey dude, I totally love you and I totally want to help you. What's up?' If he doesn't choose to come back, then he doesn't choose to come back. But, if he does choose to come back and deal with the problem, then great. That's the way it should be done -- in love. It's called love -- something that a lot of Christians don't have."

The controversy will probably still continue; but, in case it has been forgotten, there is another side to Sometime Sunday -- the band's music. Full-on nasty guitars, heavy bass lines, gut thumping drums, and raw, passionate vocals thrust *Stone* to an intense level of power. And hopes are high for the band's second

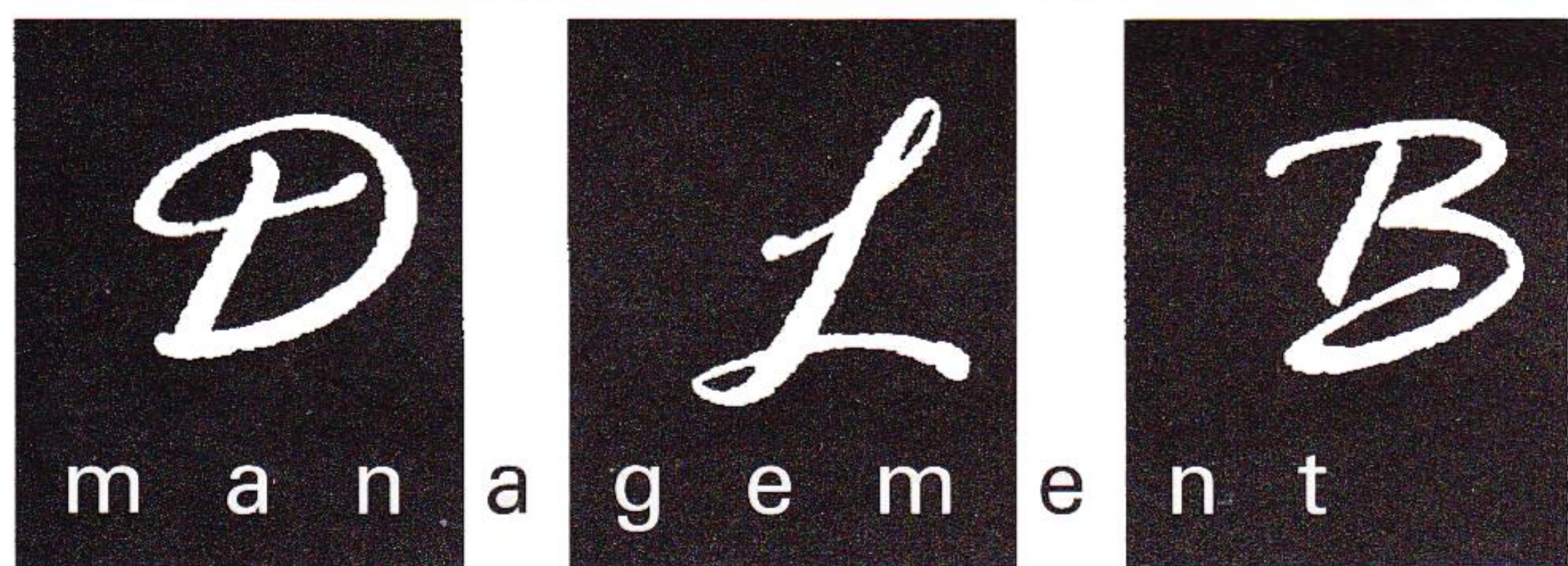
album, *Drain*, even though the band is still without a permanent drummer.

Sometime Sunday again had to borrow a drummer to fill the band's (what seems to be) un-fillable gap. Jacob, who played on the demo, *Pain*, will lay down the drum tracks for the new album. And, as with the first album, Sometime Sunday will continue the hunt for a permanent fixture behind the drum kit. "It hasn't really hindered us. It's just very frustrating. We just have different personalities than most bands. I think a lot of people think Christian bands are insanely holy people. More often times than not, we're just normal. It's really hard to find a good drummer, period. To find a good Christian drummer, and then to find a good Christian drummer with the same kind of attitude we have has proven to be a very difficult thing. I either get really awesome drummers, or I get really awesome people.

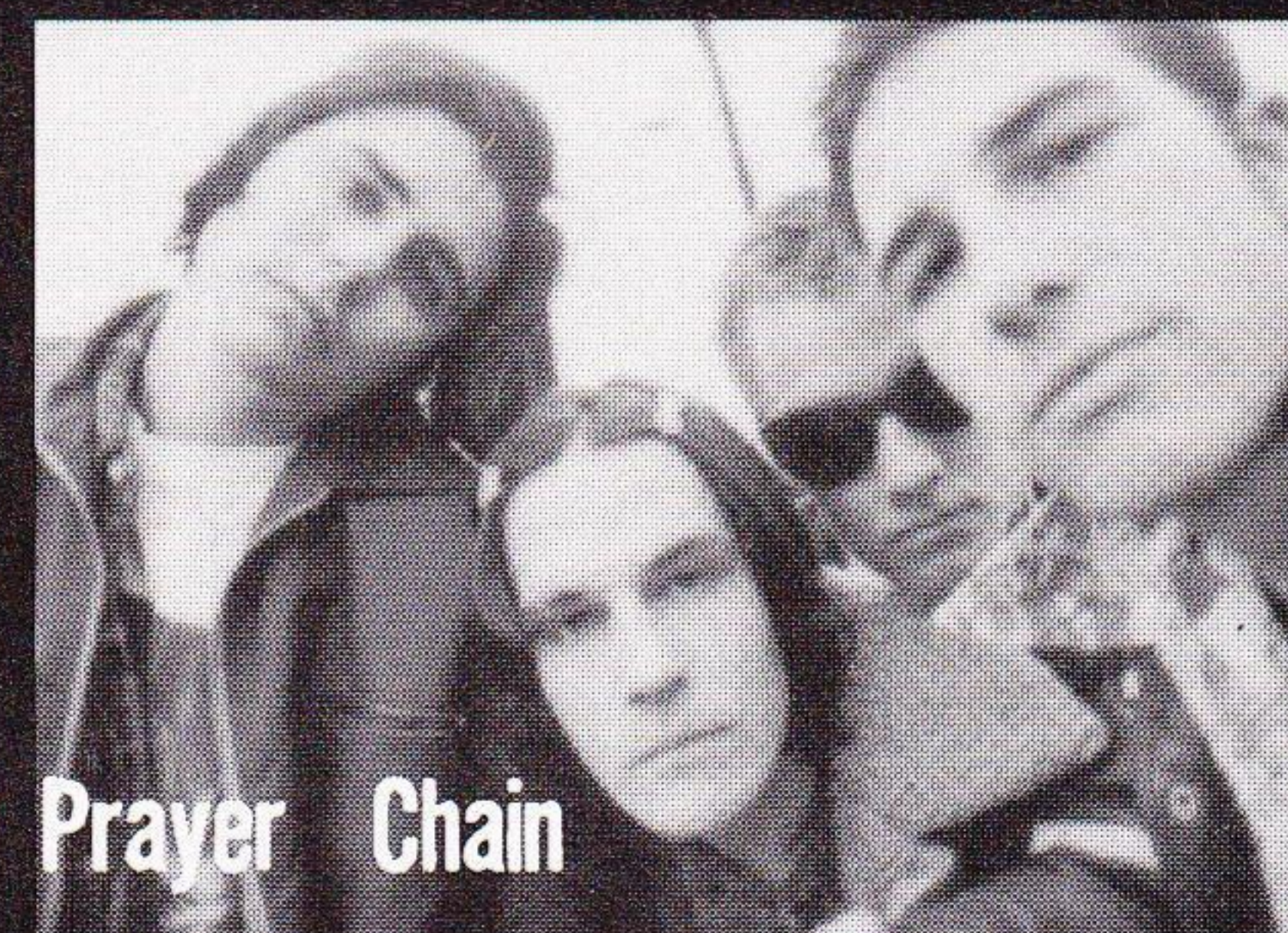
"I don't think God



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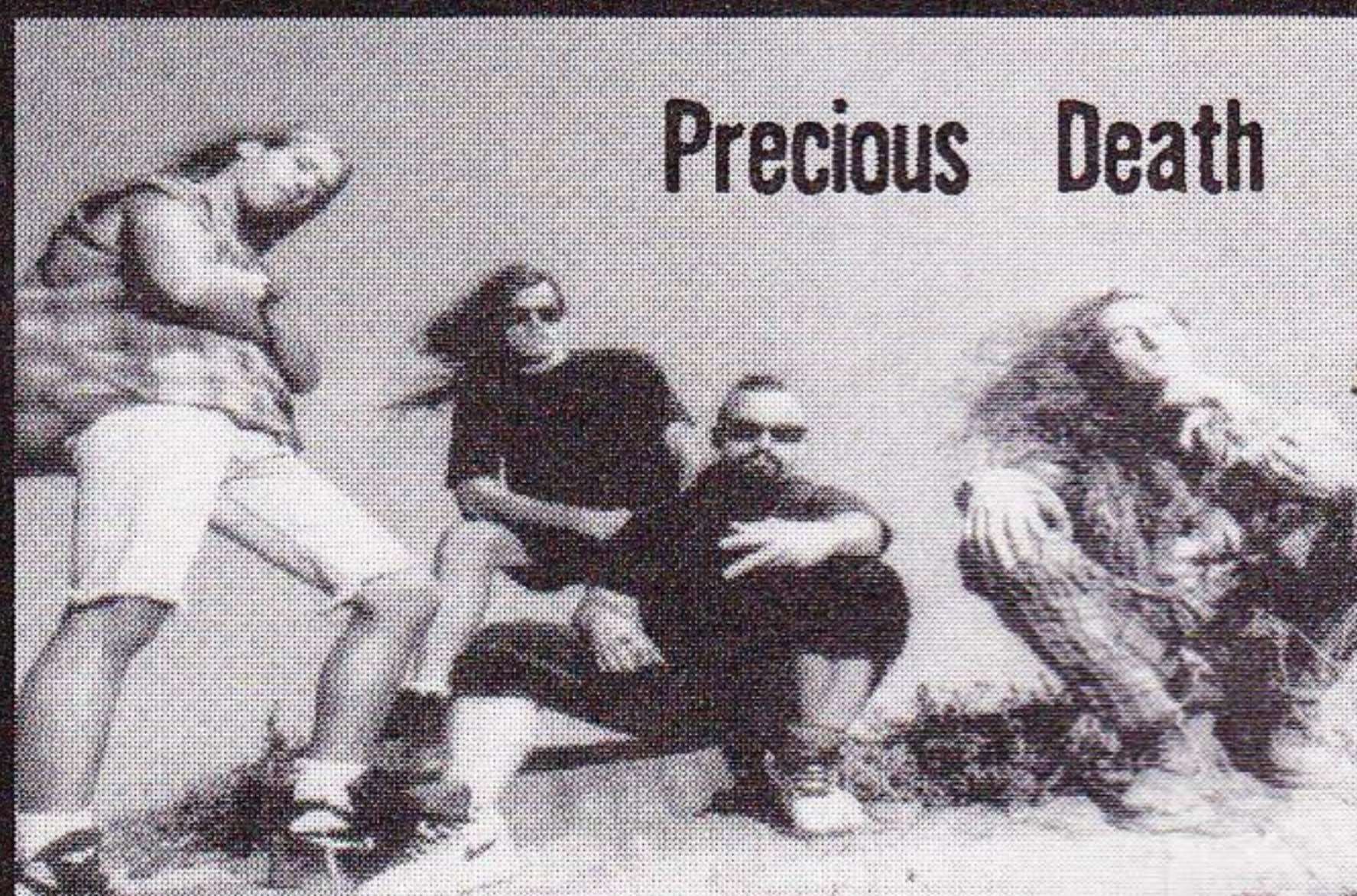
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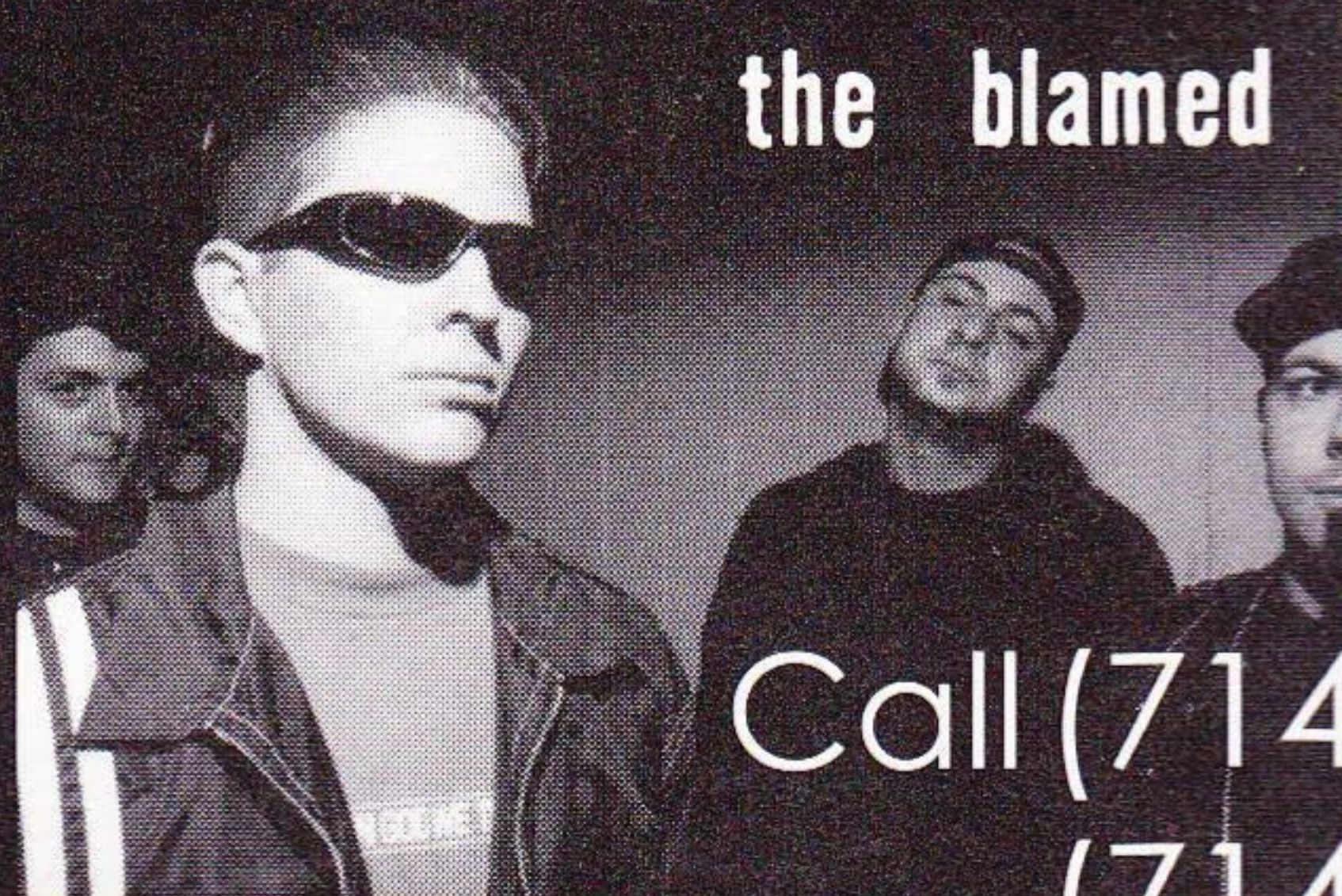
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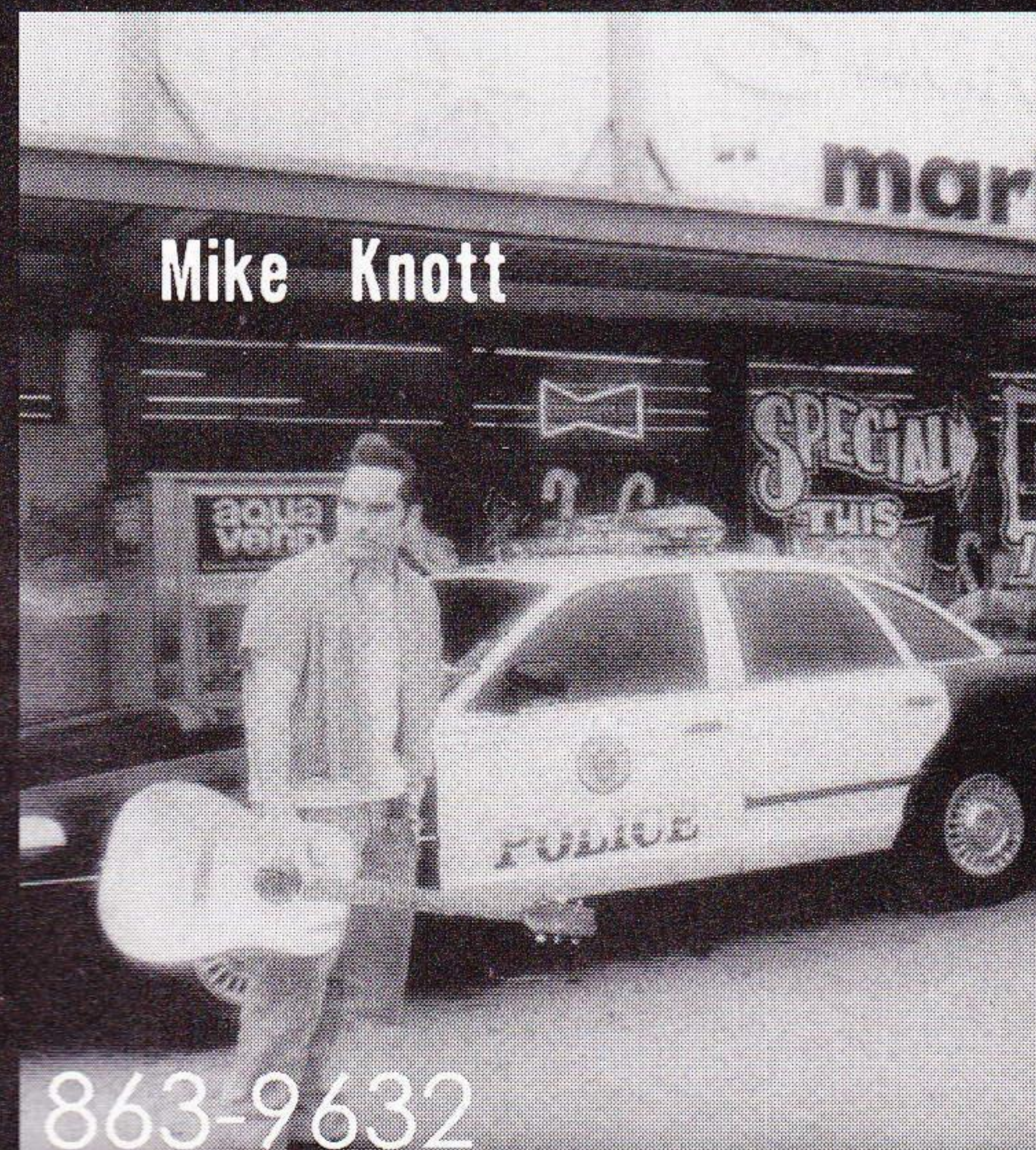
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wants us to stop, because all these doors keep opening up. I don't think they're forced. I just think it's something that He's doing. Not to make myself or the band sound too spiritual about things, but that's kind of one of the things we've been looking at -- wondering if we should be shutting this down. I don't think so, and nobody around us thinks so either.

"We've never not had a drummer to play with. We've never had to really turn anything down. It's just really frustrating, because we need to find somebody that wants to make Sometime Sunday their home."

Regardless of the vacancy, *Drain* is expected to be released sometime in April. Andy Prickett of Prayer Chain will again produce the album, but he will approach the recording process (along with the band) in a different direction. Fans who are anticipating another naked

album may not get what they want. "When we first went into the studio for *Stone*, we wanted everything to be raw without any effects or anything like that. We got that sound. We did that. But, you know, I only found a few people -- not a lot -- who were like, 'Yeah, that's what you've got to do. Yeah, that was awesome.' It wasn't that appreciated. It seems like people are more interested in hearing a big sound. You listen to Nirvana and they're huge on their disc. Then, when you hear them live, they're awful.

"On this next album, I think we're going to use a little

bit of effect. We're not going to go overboard. It's not going to sound that polished. We're probably going to use a few techniques. We're going to use a lot of analog stuff as much as we possibly can. We're going to keep the digital for reproduc-

tion and stuff, but we're going to try our best to keep everything analoged. It just gives it a warmer tone. When you go into digital, you lose some frequencies -- some high end and a little bit of low end. It's a

more homey, kind of in-your-face kind of thing when you use analog."

At this point, Mikee

seemed to get a little choked up, as if he just lost his best friend. But, he took a deep, smoke-free breath and continued. "It's frustrating, because we want the album to be completely and totally without anything, but we also have to realize that it needs some polishing up in some places. Our philosophy is still the same. We still want to do as minimal as possible, but there's probably going to be some enhancement at some points.

"I hope we don't have to double anything. Andy might make us double a little, but if we do it will be very minimal. I'm against it totally, but it's not just my say. I got four other guys I've got to talk to about it. Who knows? It's crazy. It's hard. It's difficult. When you have five opinions, it gets worse and worse and worse."

Whether or not *Drain* will be as stripped as *Stone*, another important question one must deal with is whether or not

"It's really frustrating, because we need to find somebody that wants to make Sometime Sunday their home."



Sometime Sunday has grown musically. Does the world really want a *Stone: Part Two*? Mikee doesn't seem to. "I think the musicianship of the band is better. I know I'm a little bit better. I started singing when the band started, which was two and a half years ago. Hopefully, my vocals have gotten better. The sound is mostly the same, but I think our songwriting has progressed into something that's a little bit better. I think it's going to be a much better album -- a lot better than the last one. I think it will even be more intense than the last one and more brutal than the last one, yet it will be more musical and more melodic."

Many would agree that the thing that makes a band a great band is the live show. It's not the personality of the band or how the band records its albums. It's not the artwork inside the album, nor how long the singer's hair is. A band is usually judged on its musicianship and its ability to play live.

A way for a band to improve its talent is to play a lot and take lessons from other bands who play a lot. Sometime Sunday hasn't exactly tore up the highways across America, but it did have the opportunity to play with a band that did.

As mentioned before, Sometime Sunday, with the help of Prayer Chain's manager, Frank Tate, opened up for Mortal on the band's last two shows ever. Mikee learned a lot. "I was never really into Mortal's sound all that much -- never into the industrial thing, never into the sampling kind of thing. I don't like it when bands preach, I really don't. I don't think it's right in most instances. This however was one time when I loved it when Jyro would say stuff. This guy really affects a lot of people. To look out into a mosh pit and see a couple of hundred kids raising their hands to the Lord and actually worshipping . . . dude, that sends chills up your bones. That's a very powerful

thing. And I think that they had that because they desired to do what Christ wanted them to do. Hopefully, I and Sometime Sunday can follow suite."

With an ad in last month's HM, Sometime Sunday has opened themselves up to be on the road some this year. Plans are to maybe play Cornerstone and do some other East Coast touring. But, Mikee and his guitarist Kevin are family men -- Mikee with wife and daughter Shayde, and Kevin with wife and son Kiai. So, touring will be limited. "Having a family is the priority. For Kevin and I, the priority is totally and completely our families. Touring will be minimal. We'll be doing it in the summertime and stuff like that, but we won't be like the Prayer Chain, who is out every five seconds. We need to be home and doing the family kind of thing. Sometime Sunday is a priority, but it's not as high up as our families are."

Christians, sinners, lovers of the Word, backsliders,

devoted, apathetic . . . Sometime Sunday has been labeled everything under the sun. But, one thing seems to be evident through the trivial blunder, and that is a devotion to God. "I hope people don't stop buying our albums because of my personal beliefs. I still love the Lord, and I still want to seek and do what He wants me to do -- and that's it." **HM**

**Looking Ahead
to issue #53:
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ever down

ITSELF A NICHE IN THE GENERAL MARKETPLACE. HOW DID ALL THIS HAPPEN?

"The band has definitely improved a lot since the last time we talked. It was also a matter of just going to shows and meeting people and pitching our new material. We got lucky and have been able to play with bands like Stompbox, Shear Terror, and Life of Agony."

WHAT ABOUT FUGAZI?

"It has been printed that we already played with Fugazi, but it's just in the works. It's a big benefit show in the Spring at some college where Green Day just played."

DO YOU KNOW WHAT THE FUND-RAISER IS FOR?

"We have no idea at all. Someone asked, 'Do you want to play a show with Fugazi?' What are we going to say? 'No?! Save the rain forest -- sure, whatever you want!'"

WHAT OTHER GENERAL MARKETPLACE BANDS HAVE YOU PLAYED WITH?

"Sam Black Church, Sick Of It All, Slapshot, Strip Mind, Wargasm, Souls At Zero -- we've just lucked out. (Writer's Note: I had to pull this question out of Chris, because he was weary about listing off bands -- so any jealous musician that wants to call Chris a name-dropper can put a cork in it.)"

IS IT TRUE YOU'RE DOING A CD RELEASE PARTY WITH SAM BLACK CHURCH?

"Their manager is really impressed with our new material. He asked us when our album was coming out, and we said, 'Around January.' He told us the new Sam Black would be out around the end of February, and they're going to play a big show for the CD release party. He asked if we wanted to make it a double

CD release party. Of course, we did. Sam Black Church is huge around here."

TO END THIS INTERVIEW, TELL ME A FUNNY STORY OF SOMETHING RELATED TO EVERDOWN.

"The first day we got to the hotel (where they were staying to record the album), we acted like a bunch of two year olds. We were totally rambunctious -- just going nuts and thrashing the place. The guy in the room next to us was pounding on the wall both nights. The second night, sometime after midnight, someone knocks on the door and says, 'This is the police. We've had some complaints about the noise.' At this point, Erik was on the floor, I had the mattress on top of him, and I was just wailing on him. We all jumped up and tried to throw the room back together, and the guy kept yelling, 'Open the door, open the door!' Finally, I went to the door and slowly opened it. It ended up just being Brandon."

"Also, the morning we were supposed to leave, Brandon called the receptionist twice, wanting wake-up calls at five to six and ten after six. So, the first wake-up call comes, he answers the phone, says, 'Okay,' and goes back to sleep. The second call comes, he takes it, says, 'Thanks,' and then lays back down again. An hour and a half later, Brandon jumps up out of bed, looks around the room frantic, and starts yelling, 'They never called me! They never called me!' He calls down to the receptionist and starts yelling, 'You never called me!' And then Brandon looks at me and goes, 'Hello! I'm gonna miss my plane! You got to hurry and get me there.' Neither of us knew where it was. It's seven o'clock in the morning, and I'm trucking to an airport I don't know how to get to. It was a nightmare. So, I guess you could say the funniest things happen to Everdown involve working with Brandon."

HM

by david jenison

While many bands don't pull punches, Everdown's Chris Wible swings full-force with knockout potential. Seeing no need to gloss over low-quality or lame mistakes, Wible calls things the way they really are. In an interview that's refreshingly honest, Wible talks about the annoying process of getting signed, some excellent opportunities to play with great bands, and a hilarious ending story that will shed new light on how record label executives behave outside the office.

CHRIS, LET'S BEGIN WITH SOME HISTORY. I INTERVIEWED YOU TWO YEARS AGO FOR HEAVEN'S METAL AS ONE OF THE FOUR BEST UNSIGNED BANDS. BACK THEN YOU WERE CALLED DRY BONES. WHAT'S HAPPENED SINCE THEN?

"We put out our first Dry Bones tape and seven-inch through ART. Later, we changed our name to Crawl Space, and soon after that Erik decided to take some time off from the band. Rob Wolfe from Sacramento took over vocals, and we recorded the Crawl Space tape with

him. Things didn't work out with Rob, so we didn't release it. Erik came back and redid the vocals, which ended up being a million times better. He's back with us now. ART also took this tape and, from what I hear, the tape did quite well."

SO, HOW DID YOU HOOK UP WITH TOOTH & NAIL RECORDS?

"We played a show with Mortal out here, and they loved us, so the Mortal guys went to Brandon (Tooth & Nail owner and world-famous belly dancer). We stayed at Crawl Space for a while, but there is another band called Crawl Space that originated from California. They are on an indie label and are still putting albums out. When we were going to sign with Brandon, we had to change the name. Erik came up with Everdown. No meaning, but it sounded hard and cool, so we used it."

DIDN'T BRANDON WANT YOU TO CALL IT SOMETHING LIKE EVERLOVE?

"Yeah, but we said, 'No way!'"

SINCE WE LAST TALKED, THE BAND HAS TOTALLY CARVED

Newsboys

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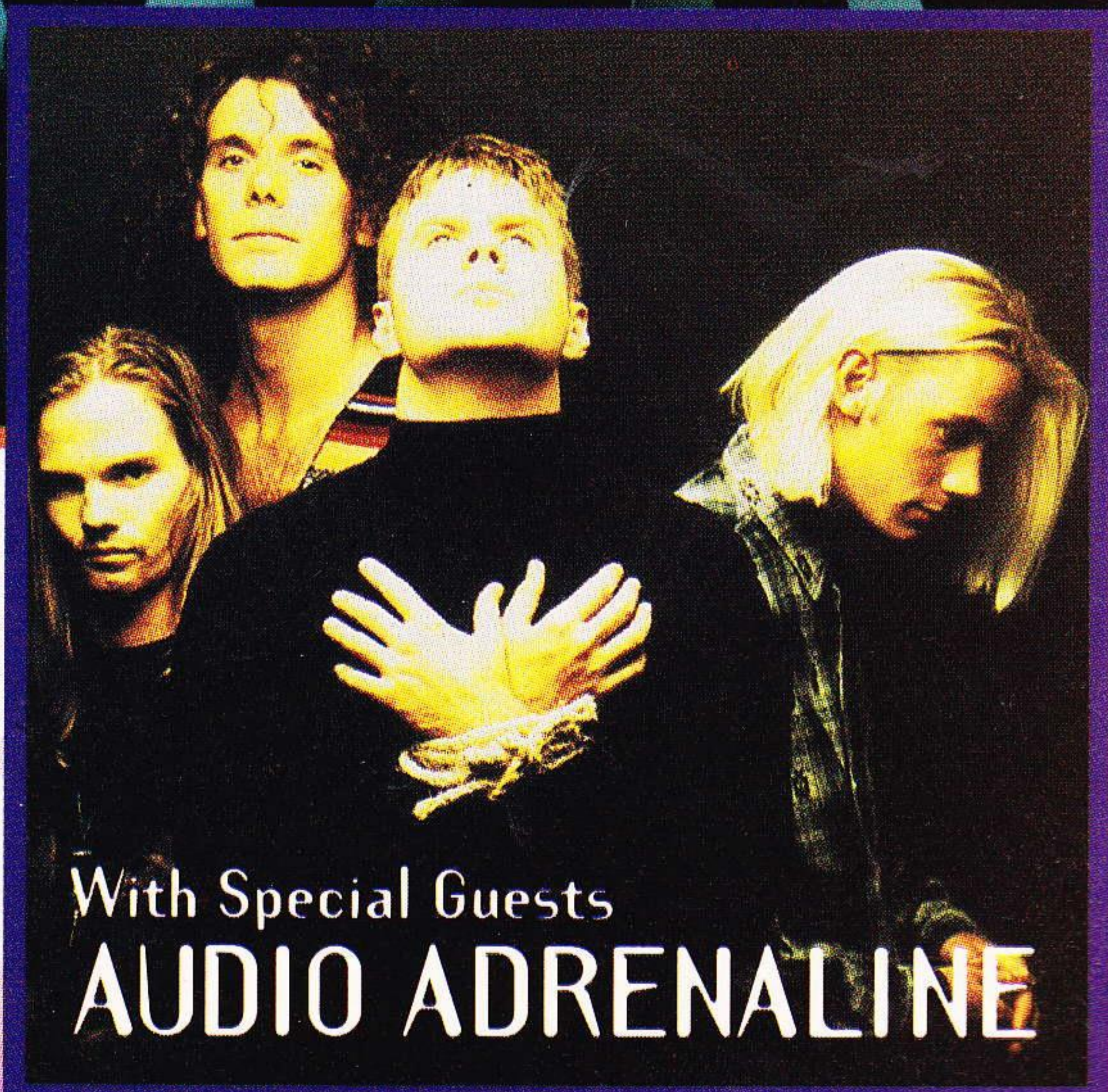
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DON'T KNOW -- can we be

by andrew crump

PHOTO © KAREN MASON



serious?

go from country & western to funk to punk rock in the time span of about three and a half minutes."

DO YOU HAVE TO MEDITATE FOR AN HOUR TO GET YOUR MIND FOCUSED ON THE MUSICAL STYLE OF THE BAND YOU ARE ABOUT TO PRACTICE WITH?

"No, not at all. I think Don't Know, musically, for all the guys in both bands, clicks a little bit better. But, we don't have to get into any particular mindset or anything. It would help if we watch *Star Wars* or *Black Belt Jones* before we start a Don't Know practice. That would help us get in the mindset better."

WHO'S BLACK BELT JONES?

"You've never seen *Black Belt Jones*? You have not lived, buddy boy. You've got to see *Black Belt Jones*."

IS IT A WEST COAST THING?

"No, it's an everywhere thing. It's the mutha ship of all martial arts movies -- the mutha ship. It's where it's at. It's like a really cheesy 70's martial arts movie with lots of afros and lots of jive."

"One thing I'd like to say . . . You've got to put this in the interview thing you do when you print it. You have to say: 'For '94 it was Hardcore '94, and for '95 it's Don't Know with the Hardcore Jive '95.' That's where it's at."

As you can tell, Don't Know has a different sort of view on things -- at least through the eyes of Matt. As unusual as the band (or Matt) may seem, there is a strong assurance behind the comical surface. "God has His ways of working in people, and it's not always with the right-in-your-face Gospel message. Like, with Don't Know, we had a lady at Cornerstone come up to us, and she was all grins at our merchandise booth and saying how much we blessed her because we just made her laugh. We're just happy to see that, and hopefully, we can continue to share music with people, so they can enjoy it."

"We're not spiritual he-men or anything like that, but we just play our music and be big geeks the way God intended us to be." HM

It doesn't happen often, but sometimes a person has so much music built up inside that the only way to release that creativeness adequately is to form two different bands. That's what happened with Ed Carrigan, Paul Henry, and Matt Johnson of Blenderhead. They are also active members, along with vocalist Dan Henry, of another (less recognized) band called Don't Know. But, with a pending contract with Tooth & Nail Records and a zany interview in *Heaven's Metal*, Don't Know is knocking on the door with its brand of early Red Hot Chili Pepper's style of funk mixed with the unpredictable lyrical genius of Steve Taylor.

But, two bands, two albums, and too many salty carrots (that's what he was crunching on during the interview) seems to have left Matt, my interviewee, a little on the crazed side.

WHEN DID DON'T KNOW GET SIGNED TO TOOTH & NAIL RECORDS?

"Well, we're not actually signed. We have an EP contract that is based on sales. It's sort of an experiment to see if it will sell alright, and see if we can create a fan base. We're like, really messed up musically, and people might not like it. They totally like us or they don't. It's kind of like Diana Ross, or something like that -- or like Ray Charles, or Barney the Dinosaur, or Ronald McDonald or Sammy Davis Jr."

WHAT DRIVES THE BAND MUSICALLY?

"We're kind of a funky version of an electric hauckaloogie, pretty much. If you could make a hauckaloogie electric, that's what we would sound like -- with a little bit of funk. That's our sound. We are the epitome

of geek-core."

WHAT SORT OF FAN BASE HAVE YOU GATHERED? WHAT ARE THE FANS LIKE THAT COME TO YOUR SHOWS?

"Our fans are nerds -- people who like *Star Wars* trivia. They're just really geeky people, who wear really stupid clothes and like to get down to really quirky music. That's pretty much our fans."

IS DON'T KNOW THE SIDE PROJECT, OR IS BLENDERHEAD THE SIDE PROJECT?

"Blenderhead, I guess you could say, is sort of a side project out of control. Don't Know has been together for about twice as long. Bill (Powers) and I are the only original members of Blenderhead, and that started about two and a half years ago. Don't Know has been around longer, but Blenderhead has seen a little bit more success. And, rightfully so, because Bill is like a really hard-working guy, and Don't Know is just a bunch of slackers."

ARE THE BANDS TOTALLY SEPARATE? DOES DON'T KNOW DO ANY BLENDERHEAD SONGS, OR VICE-VERSA?

"Each band does their own set. We played a show in Portland just this last weekend. We played with this really great punk band called Crux. Don't Know and Blenderhead both played totally separate sets. Don't Know was the second band and Blenderhead was the headlining band. We don't mix and match songs during the sets at all. Don't Know is usually the band that people want to go home on, because we annoy them so badly, because we're big geeks. Blenderhead is the cool kid band, or so I'm told."

WHAT ARE THE CRITERIA FOR A SONG TO BECOME A DON'T KNOW SONG?

"It's got to be really jacked up. You have to have about 10 changes, and you have to be able to

What do you think about, musically, when someone mentions Florida? Tom Petty? Southern Rock? Just mellow Southern beach music, right? So, where does Strongarm fit in this picture? If you guessed nowhere, then you have the right answer.

Led by the vocals of Jason Berggren, this is a five-piece hardcore rock unit who have just finished recording their first long-player, *Atone-ment*, for Tooth & Nail and, unlike Olivia Newton-John, this is one band which has never been mellow.

Berggren caught the musical bug from his father at an early age. "When I was very young," remembers Berggren, "my father was an entertainer. He stopped doing that," says the 22 year old, "when I was about seven. Guitars were always laying around, and when I was about 12, I started to teach myself to play the guitar. That's how, I guess, I got into music."

And does Berggren's music sound anything like his dad's? "He was just an entertainer, like a lounge entertainer who sang popular love songs and stuff. Simon & Garfunkel and that kind of stuff." What? No Olivia Newton-John?

In spite of the slight differences in their musical choosings, Berggren's father approves of what his son is doing. "He's happy to see that I'm actually sticking with something and staying committed. He's real supportive."

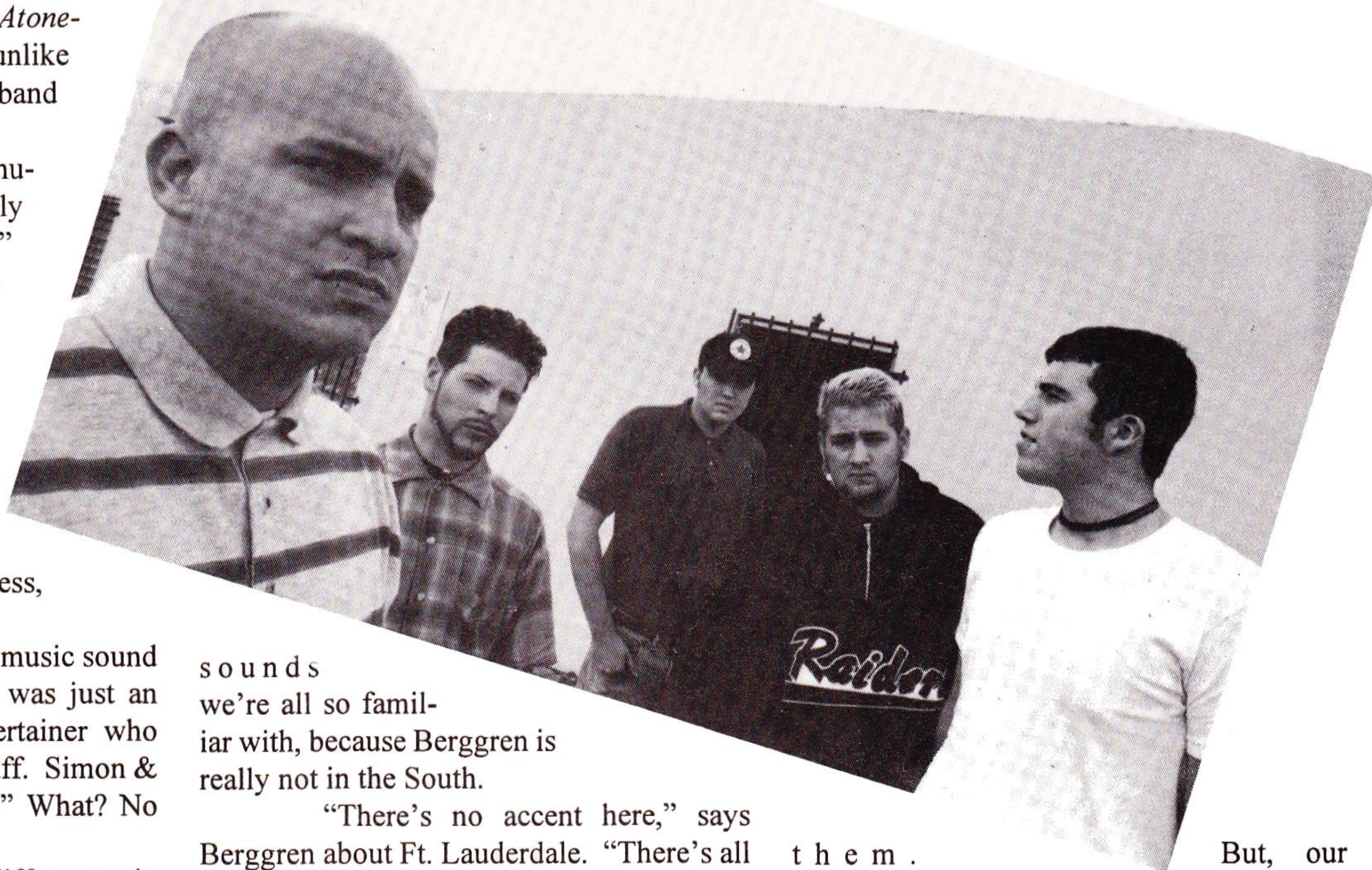
Berggren, who is the victim of a broken home and did not come from a Christian home, came to Christ with the help of one of his friend's parents. Even now, he must deal with a mother who is very much against Christianity, and who had bad experiences dating back to her early years when she was raised a Catholic. But, even in this negative atmosphere, Berggren had a sense about the Truth he would eventually discover in Christianity.

"I can remember going to church with my neighbor when I was about eight. I went with him and his mom to Sunday School. I remember just sitting there thinking to myself as a young child, 'Gosh, this is real, this is the Truth.' And I don't know how to explain why I thought that. But, just as a small child, I knew it was the Truth."

Berggren soaked up the punk and new wave music that he heard growing up, and has incorporated these influences into the hardcore sound which can be heard in Strongarm's music. This music doesn't sound like the stereotypical Southern Florida

strong arm

by dan macintosh



sounds we're all so familiar with, because Berggren is really not in the South.

"There's no accent here," says Berggren about Ft. Lauderdale. "There's all kinds of culture. It's a lot of Hispanic culture. It's really different down here."

In this creative region of Florida, Strongarm has been a unit for about a year and a half, and, until the release of its first album proper, it is supporting its self-produced EP *These Times That Try Men's Souls*. "We recorded it just before Cornerstone last year," recalls Berggren. "It worked out really good for us, because I believe that it had a lot to do with us getting on Tooth & Nail." The folks at Tooth & Nail, it turns out, were pretty impressed with this project that the band had put out on its own.

Now, the band is looking forward to the release of its first full album. "We recorded an album in November," states Berggren, "it's 10 songs. It has all the songs that are on the EP. We were pressed for time. Obviously, we don't want to put out garbage. We like those songs, and they're still fairly young as it is. We wrote four new ones, and we had to record two older songs that we'd never recorded, because we needed 10 songs by contract, and it will be out in March."

"The Word says that, as Christians, we're to reach out to the lost," explains Berggren when asked about the group's goals and philosophies, "and that's what our goal is. And, along the way, of course, we want to encourage our brothers and be encouraged by

them.

But, our goal is secular -- to reach the lost. We want to make the best music we can possibly make for the Lord -- to reach out to the lost."

Reaching the lost is their highest purpose, but they also have other plans. "You know, we can break down a lot of stereotypes that everyone seems to have about Christians, and also show people by example what a Christian is. And that's what we do on a small scale when we play and stuff."

Unlike some bands, who choose to let the music speak for itself in the concert situation, Strongarm is a group that makes it clear from the stage exactly what they are. "I always say what we're about," says Berggren. "We have some songs that I talk about. We have a new song that's about abortion. And, with this song, I always bring up that everyone in their life is given the choice to do anything they want. That's what the Lord has given you; a choice to do what you want. The options in life are different. I talk about how people need to be responsible for their actions. Abortion is not birth control. I always talk about how I believe sex is something very holy and made for marriage. And a child is sacred."

They don't just want their listeners to choose life. They also hope and pray that some will choose new life.

HM

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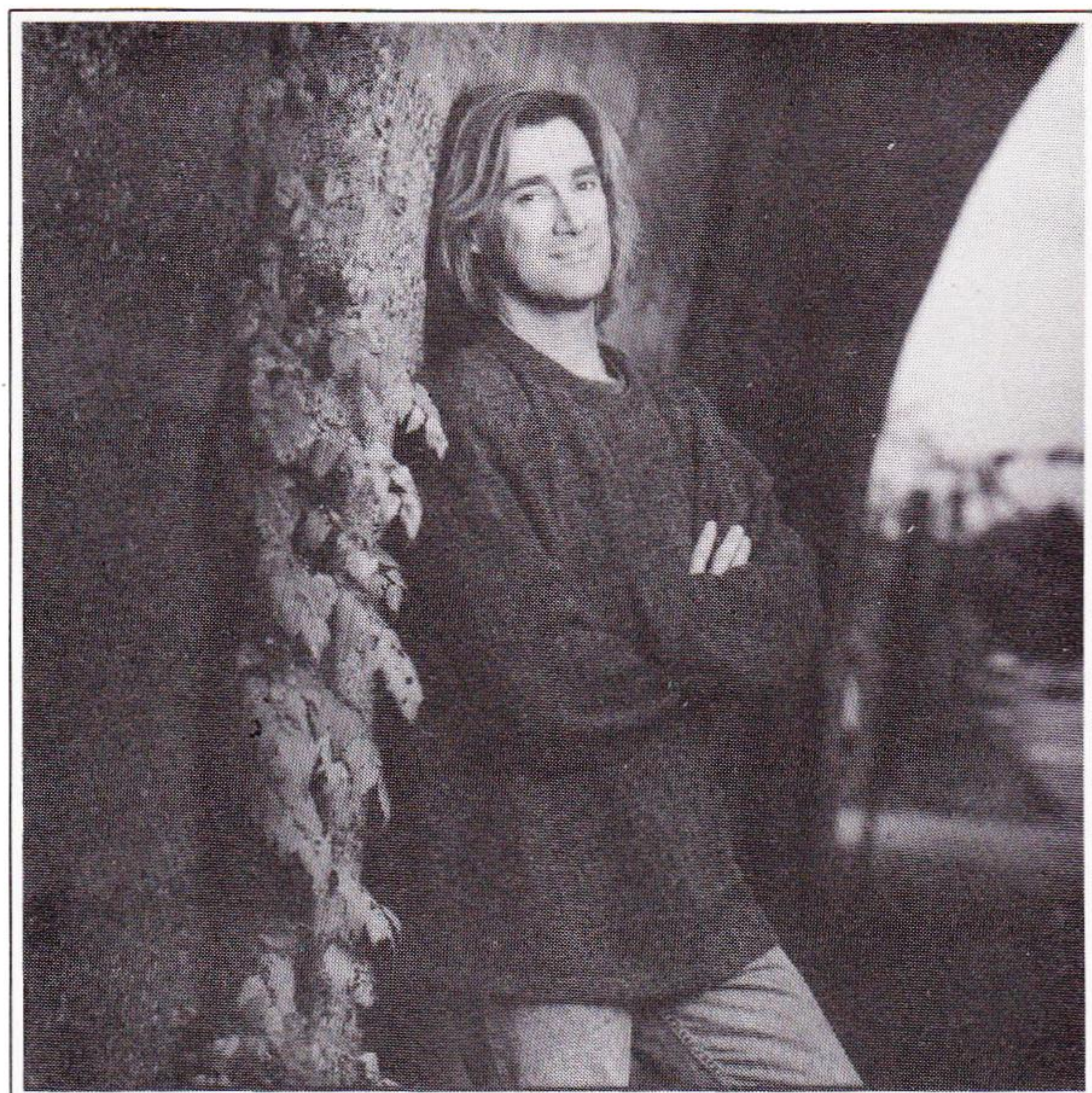
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Large Shake To Go, Please!

By Randy Rocker



Emerging from handling lead vocal duties for Head East to securing the front spot for Christian rock's version of the Rolling Stones -- Petra -- John Schlitt has enjoyed many facets of success. His latest venture is his debut solo album, *Shake*. Combining a firm rock sound with touching ballads, *Shake* features an impressive cast of musicians, including Dan and David Huff (Giant, Whiteheart), and Mark Heimermann (DC Talk).

HOW DID YOU WANT *SHAKE* TO DIFFERENTIATE YOUR WORK WITH PETRA?

"Petra has always been a joint effort with the five of us," explains John, "with mostly Bob Hartman, since he was the founding member. As far as recording with Petra, I've probably never given that much of an input as far as my musical tastes and what I'd like to hear. With *Shake*, I was able to go in, write what was on my heart, and to basically let loose. *Shake* is almost a collage of what I feel music is today. It's got so me rock, it's got some pop, and it's got what I feel are intimate, from-the-heart type songs."

WHEN DID YOU FIRST DESIRE TO DO A SOLO ALBUM?

"About two or three years ago. I started doing solo dates using Petra tapes, because

there was a lot of churches who could use what we do live, but couldn't afford Petra. As time went on, people asked if I was going to do a solo album. As I was thinking about it, I thought it would be cool and really fun. There was a lot that I wanted to say that I really hadn't a chance to say with Petra. This is one of five solo albums, and I'm already looking forward to the next one."

DO YOU ENJOY DOING SOLO DATES PLAYING BEFORE MORE INTIMATE CROWDS?

"I'm very, very blessed. Not only do I get a chance to be part of those big events with Petra, but I also get that chance to have more intimate contact with smaller crowds and to almost meet everybody in the audience, which is cool, because it gets you back down to reality."

I'M SURE THERE'S A PERCENTAGE OF THE PUBLIC THAT WOULD THINK A SOLO ALBUM MAY LESSEN YOUR WORK WITH PETRA.

"I'm more committed to Petra than I've ever been. The fact that the four guys allowed me to do it in the first place once again shows me the courage and strength they have. I truly believe that Petra is the ministry that God put me with. I'm just

thrilled to be part of Petra. But, I'm also thrilled that God's allowing me to stretch out in a broader sense. I'm a very blessed person to be a part of two ministries that can change lives all over the world."

PLAYING WITH DAN AND DAVID HUFF MUST HAVE BEEN A BLAST. THEY SEEMED TO HAVE ADDED A WILD, CUT LOOSE EDGE TO *SHAKE*.

"All four producers added such a fantastic, new experience for me. All of them are different than the producers I've used with Petra. I've always been a pretty big Giant fan. I've always known that they have to be two of the most talented guys in music today. It's an honor to be able to stretch out. It's a whole different world."

WHAT DOES JOHN SCHLITT LISTEN TO IN HIS SPARE TIME?

"Boy, I don't have much spare time! Between listening to new Petra songs we're recording and rehearsing my new songs, I don't have much time to listen to new stuff. I listen to stuff like DC Talk, Newsboys -- stuff that's exciting but very upfront Christian."

WHO ARE YOUR MUSICAL INFLUENCES?

"People like Steve

Perry, the guys in Foreigner, Styx, the older avant garde type of music. I have been trying to listen to a lot of the current stuff and discover what it is that kids are getting into. To be honest, I'm having a hard time. I'm still so into the arena rock type of sound, that it's hard for me to get into the style that's in now."

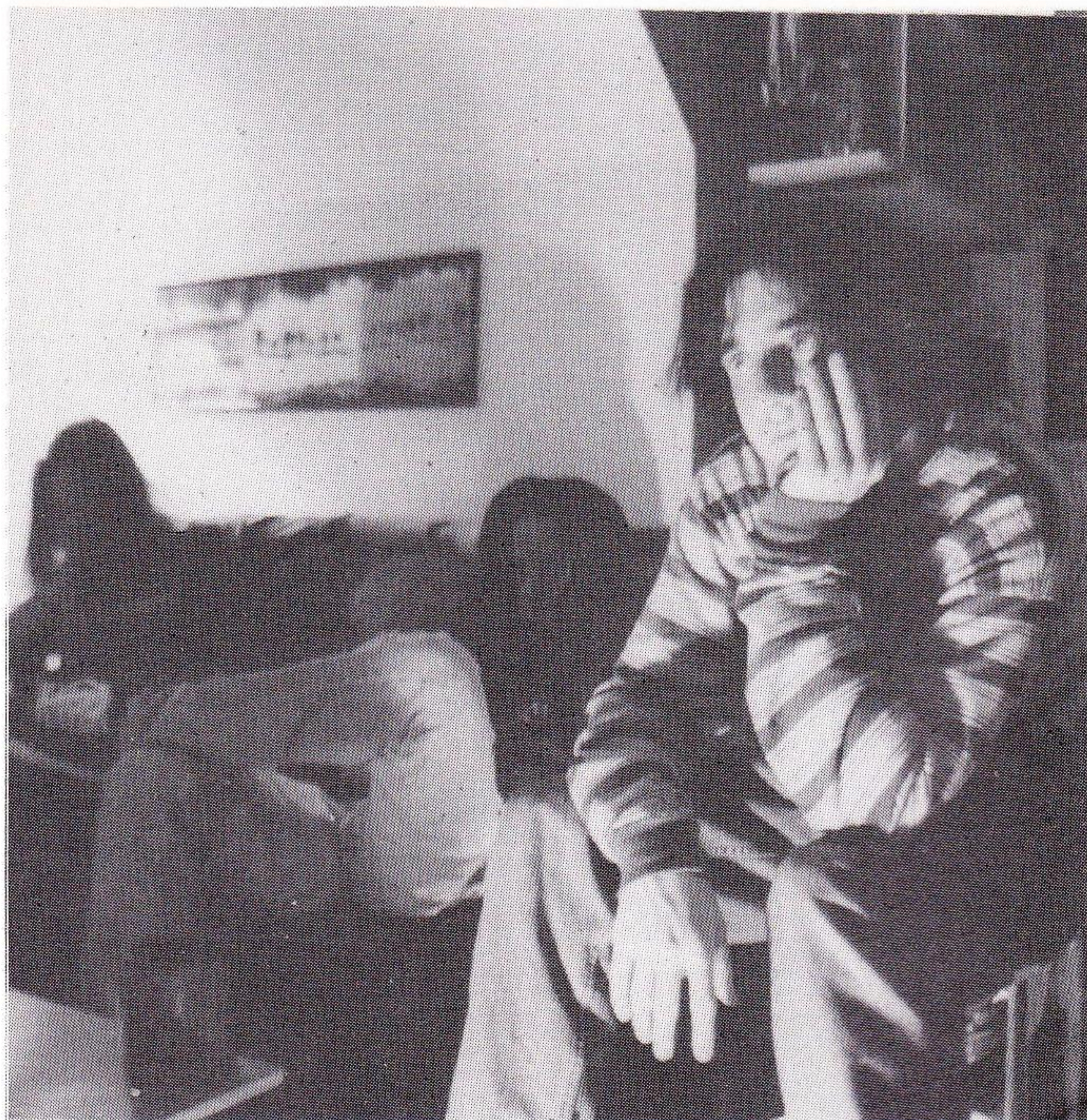
I WAS VERY IMPRESSED ON THE EMOTION YOU WERE ABLE TO CONVEY ON "INSIDE OF YOU." WHAT DID YOU WANT TO CAPTURE BEFORE GOING IN THE STUDIO?

"How many times have you seen kids hang their heads when they know the circumstances and they've got so much ahead of them? You know, they're living under a bondage of lies and they don't even realize what an unbelievable life God has for them. All they need to do is know that inside of them are miracles."

DID YOU HAVE A SPECIFIC MESSAGE IN MIND FOR *SHAKE*?

"I had a lot to say for this record. I didn't want a bunch of people to come to me with ten great songs already written, record them, and call that a solo record. I wanted to participate and broaden my commitment to Christian music. The main thing I wanted to say is, first of all, the

Continued on page 22



Soon to haunt record store shelves is the colorfully-named Argyle Park, yet another industrial trend-setter coming from the Long Island, New York area. With a style one might attempt to describe as "Mr. Bungle meets the Utah Saints," Argyle Park is a massive, Pigface-style collaboration masterminded by the happy name threesome -- Buka, Dread, and Deathwish. In what might become the most talked about industrial band since the introduction of Brainchild (aka Circle of Dust), Argyle Park will minimally turn a few heads. Argyle spokesman Buka was at home in New York with his friend, Daren, former Circle guitarist and current Klank frontman, when he spoke with David Jenison of Heaven's Metal. The New York sun had already set many hours before.

R . E . X . RECORDS HAS BEEN ATTEMPTING TO PUSH MANY OF THEIR BANDS INTO THE GENERAL MARKET PLACE. WHICH MARKET WILL ARGYLE PARK EMPHASIZE?

"That's a good question," says Buka. "I have no idea, to be perfectly honest with you. Argyle is what it is. I would

love to see Argyle break on through and be really big in the CBA market and really big in the secular market -- which is anybody's wish and dream for a band. There's a purpose for both markets, and I won't dis one over the other. I think they both have their spot in the world. Where we place the most emphasis, I have no idea."

I APPRECIATE YOUR RESPECT FOR THE CBA MARKET. IT SEEMS MOST BANDS LOVE TO SLAM IT AND GLORIFY THE SECULAR INDUSTRY, WHICH MAKES ME THINK THEY'RE JUST TRYING TO MILK THE CHRISTIAN MARKET.

"I don't agree with a lot of what the CBA market does -- like putting out rehashed secular music. But, there are kids out there who feel they shouldn't be listening to secular music, so what else are they going to listen to? The CBA market serves its purpose there, and I think that's great. Bands out there should be supplying that type of music. I don't believe every band should be supplying it, but I believe there should be bands out there pushing the JPM's."

"In terms of bands just trying to milk it, I'm not going to

Who Plays in Argyle Park?

judge them if that's what they feel. It depends on what you call a 'Christian band.' I don't know, though I do disagree with the motives of some bands out there that are 'Christian.'"

SO, WHO ARE THE PLAYERS ON THE ALBUM?

"The recording isn't done yet, so things can still change. But, as it stands, we have Jeff Bellew doing a vocal track; Mark Soloman doing one or two; Gyro and Jerome (Mortal); Scott Albert; Jeni from this East Coast band called Sill; Tommy Victor from Prong; Lauren from Drown... basically everyone's doing vocals except the band."

"There are some legal matters, though, which might force us to make some changes. Tommy (Prong) and Lauren (Drown) are both doing some vocals, but we have to send the songs to their labels to get approval. We do have Jim Thirwell (Foetus -- whom Ministry repeatedly imitated), the godfather of industrial music, doing our opening track. He reads a spoken word that I wrote that really sets the mode for the whole album. It's like our disclaimer. It tells what the album is about and asks people to listen with an open mind."

HOW DID SCOTT ALBERT GET ATTACHED TO THE PROJECT?

"We've known each other for years and years and years. We actually met at church -- we used to go to the same youth group together back in the day. We became really good friends. I roadied for Circle of Dust."

"He was the tech boy!" yells Daren in the background.

"Yeah, I was the tech boy -- sold the shirts, lifted up the cases."

HOW WOULD

YOU DESCRIBE THE ALBUM, STYLISTICALLY?

"The whole concept behind Argyle is to make something that has never been heard before. Whether or not we accomplished that is a different story, although I hope we did. We want to take all the styles we like and mix them into an album with a computer-driven music sound. Some music is reminiscent of techno, other of industrial, some thrash, some R&B... we went on the Havalina trip with some jazz and horns, some carnival music -- it's a whole big melting pot of every type of music we like. I sure hope we're not going to be compared to someone. I can't imagine whom we'd be compared to, but I pray it won't happen."

WILL THERE BE AN AGGRESSIVE EDGE?

"Totally. It's all aggressive. It's aerobics music. My sister says it's great to work out to -- it's 'Sweating to Argyle Park.'"

In the back, Daren yells, "It's all Cornerstone rave!"

"No it's not," laughs Buka.

IS THERE ANY DIRECTION TO THE LYRICS?

"The album gives people a couple years of our life. People are getting a lot more with this album than they expect. The title of the album is *Misguided*. A big thing went down here at a church, and we got hurt by it. The event destroyed a lot of people -- they were betrayed, deceived. The album tells what happened -- not in direct words, but it's there. It's a concept album, where every song is about a certain person, a certain place, a certain event."

WHAT KIND OF A RESPONSE DID YOU GET FOR YOUR COVER OF "DRIVE, HE SAID"

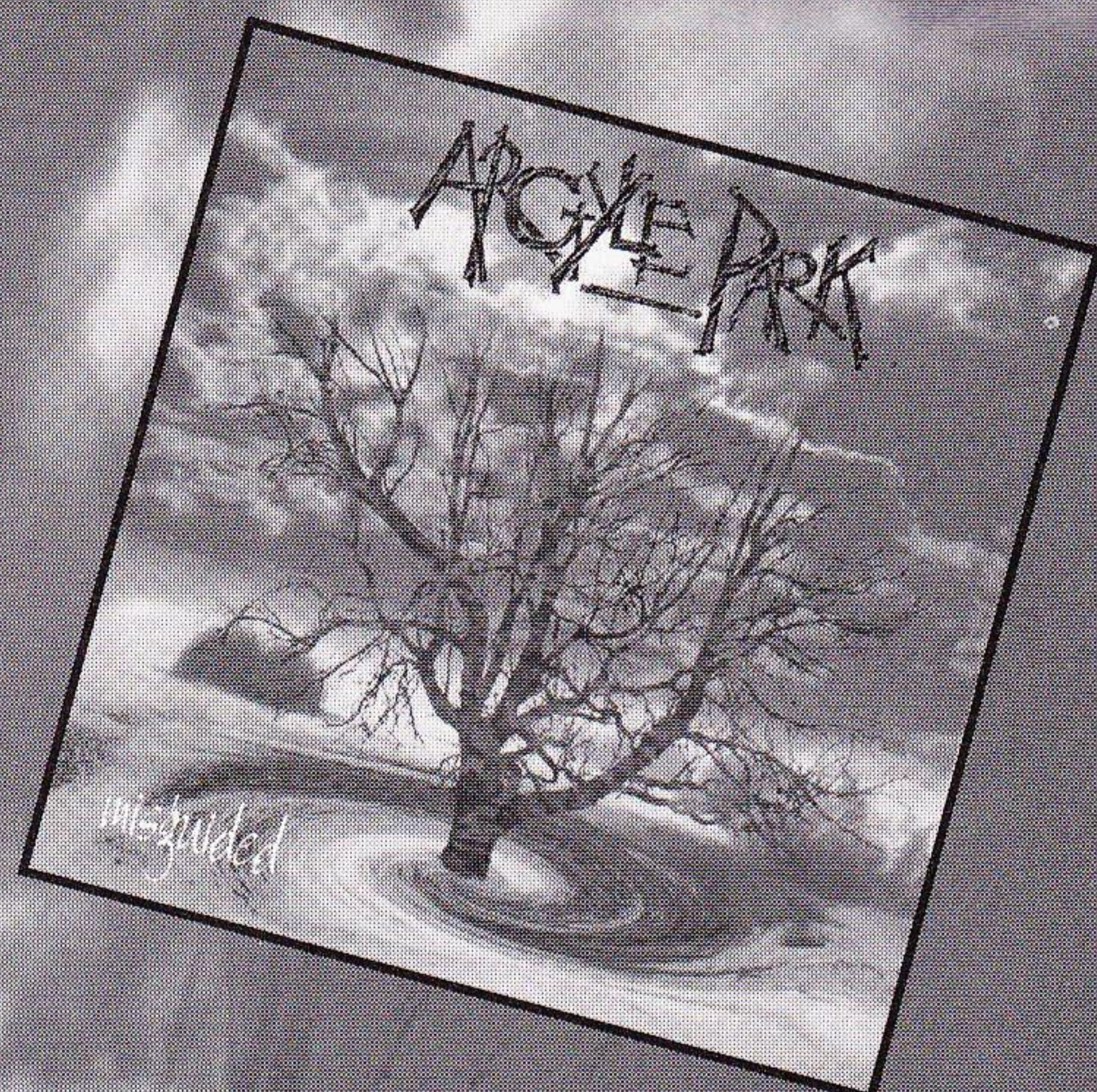
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HM #52

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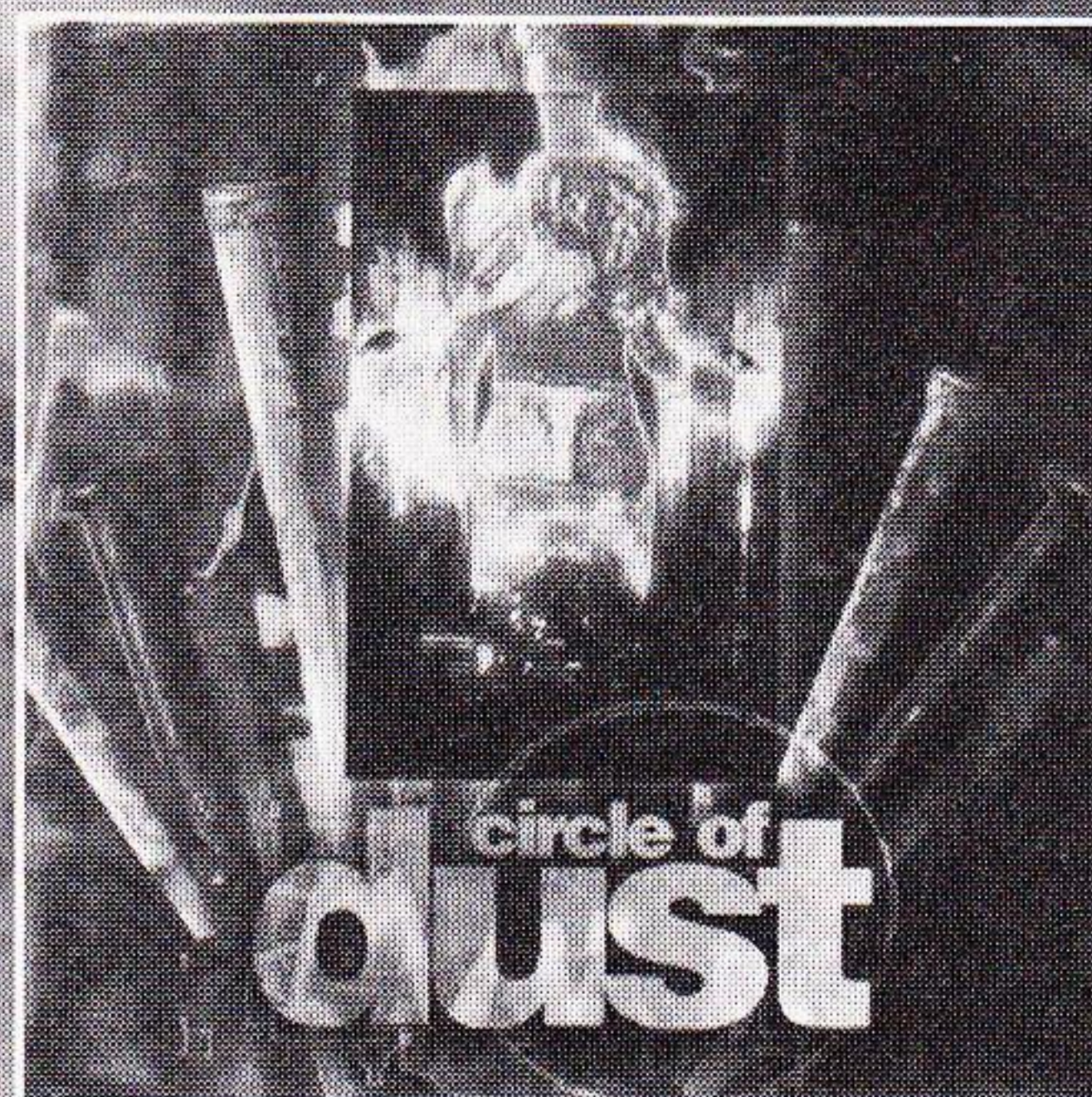
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misguided



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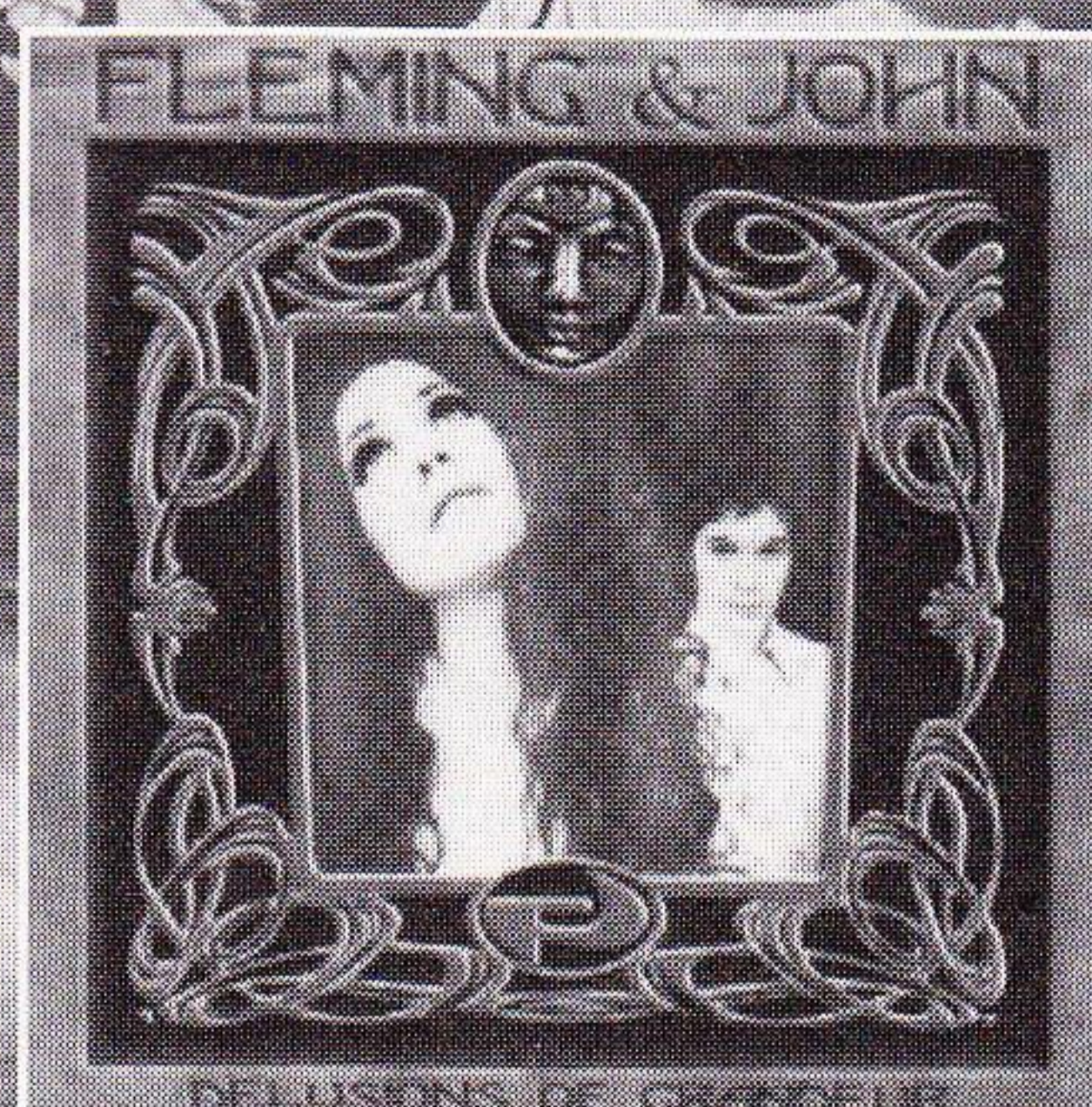
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THEY'RE BACK!

BY CHRIS CALLAWAY



Paul Robinette and Rick May, known collectively as the Walter Eugenes, have played together for over eight years and have seen themselves migrate lyrically and musically since their 1991 debut album. Working with producers Dave Perkins and Lynn Nichols (Chagall Guevara) aboard a 1948 Flexible bus converted

into a studio, the lads have constructed a new album full of honest words from honest hearts fueled by hook-filled, hard-edged modern rock. So, put on those spectacles and get a glimpse into two real human hearts full of wit, humor, and the naked truth, and read along.

WHAT DOES IT FEEL LIKE TO FINALLY BE DOING ANOTHER ALBUM?

"Well, it's great to do another record, of course," says Paul, "but we kind of had a purposeful break between the records."

WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO ADDRESS AND/OR ACCOMPLISH WITH THE NEW RECORD?

"An extension of our contract?" asks Rick.

"Probably where we've been the last four years is probably some of the things we address in the record," adds Paul. I guess what we'd like to accomplish would be getting our message across, which is pretty much just trying to show a more realistic approach to Christianity, rather than kind of the 'pie-in-the-sky' and 'Accept the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Savior and you'll never have another habit again' type of message."

ON THIS RECORD, YOU GUYS SEEM TO HAVE CHANGED THE SOUND FROM A KEYBOARD/ARENA ROCK TYPE SOUND TO A

MORE ALTERNATIVE SOUND. WHY DID YOU GUYS DECIDE TO CHANGE YOUR MUSICAL DIRECTION?

"The 80's are dead, man!" exclaims Paul.

"We haven't quite evolved from the 80's yet," admits Rick.

"I want to clear something up a little bit for the record here," says Paul. "The first record is something that we're proud of, but understanding the

circumstances from which it evolved makes a little more sense. It was a demo tape that was purchased by a record company. It wasn't an actual record that we made, thinking, 'Nobody except us is ever gonna hear this.' It was just kind of like us playin' around and throwing keyboards in there, 'cause Rick pretty much plays and writes all of our music and he just didn't play the guitar very much then. Since then, Rick has grown and we're just kind of bored with the whole keyboard thing.

"If you notice lyrically, on the first record, it's not quite as honest as this record; and partially because, when we made the first record, I didn't have the confidence at that time to really say what I wanted to say. At the time, we started thinking, 'We can't go out and

tour and support this record and make another record under the circumstances of feeling like you've got to be that careful all the time. So, I thought, 'Maybe what we should do instead is distance ourselves from the Gospel marketplace, do our music, and, if they want it, that'll be great; but, if they don't, at least you're not going to be criticized by people that you wish would accept you for who you are.'

"Now, (experiencing) both sides of the coin, (the decision is) either you want to put up with people wanting you to be worse than you really are to sell records with all the crap you have to put up with in the mainstream marketplace, or you deal with people wanting you to be better than you could actually ever be, which is kind of what's expected in the Gospel marketplace.

Artists, and pastors, and ministers of all types are kind of set up to be something that nobody can live up to, and I thought that, if I had to have a peer pressure one way or the other, I think I'd

rather have people always be pushing me to be better. What used to turn me off about the Gospel marketplace, Rick and I both have taken as a personal challenge and just said, 'Let's hit this head on. Let's be the best we can be. Let's apologize if we make mistakes, and move on.'

"This time around, though, (the lyrics) are straight from the hip."

WHAT WAS IT LIKE WORKING WITH DAVE PERKINS AND LYNN NICHOLS? WERE THERE SOME FUNNY INSTANCES, AND HOW DID THE GUYS INFLUENCE THE OVERALL SOUND?

"There was a certain moment where Dave became ecstatic and was actually running through his yard with his shirt up," says Rick.

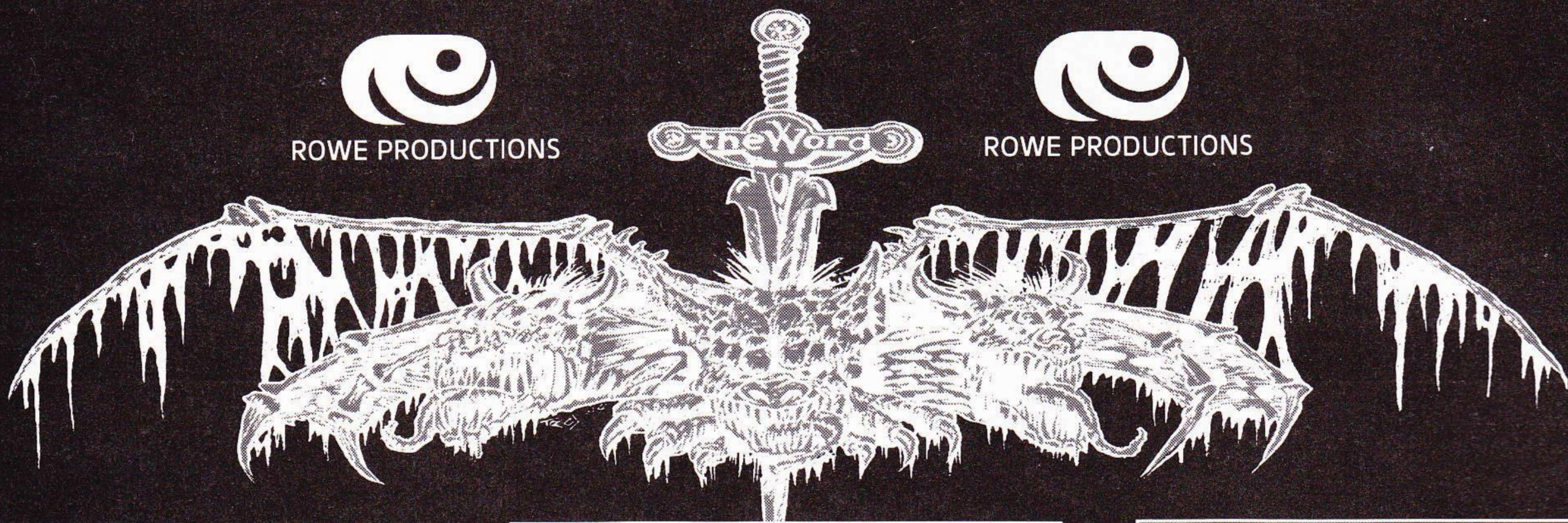
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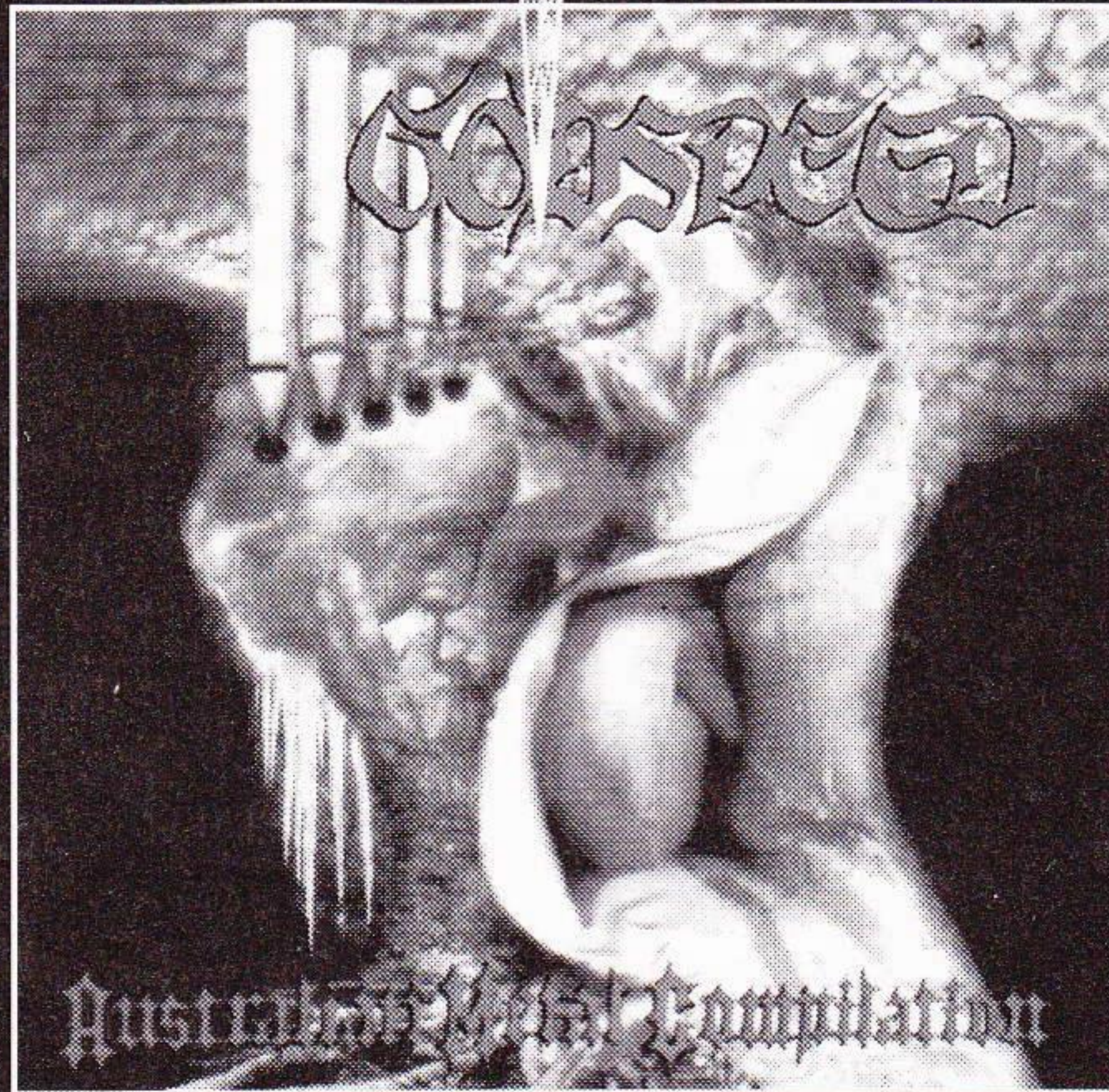
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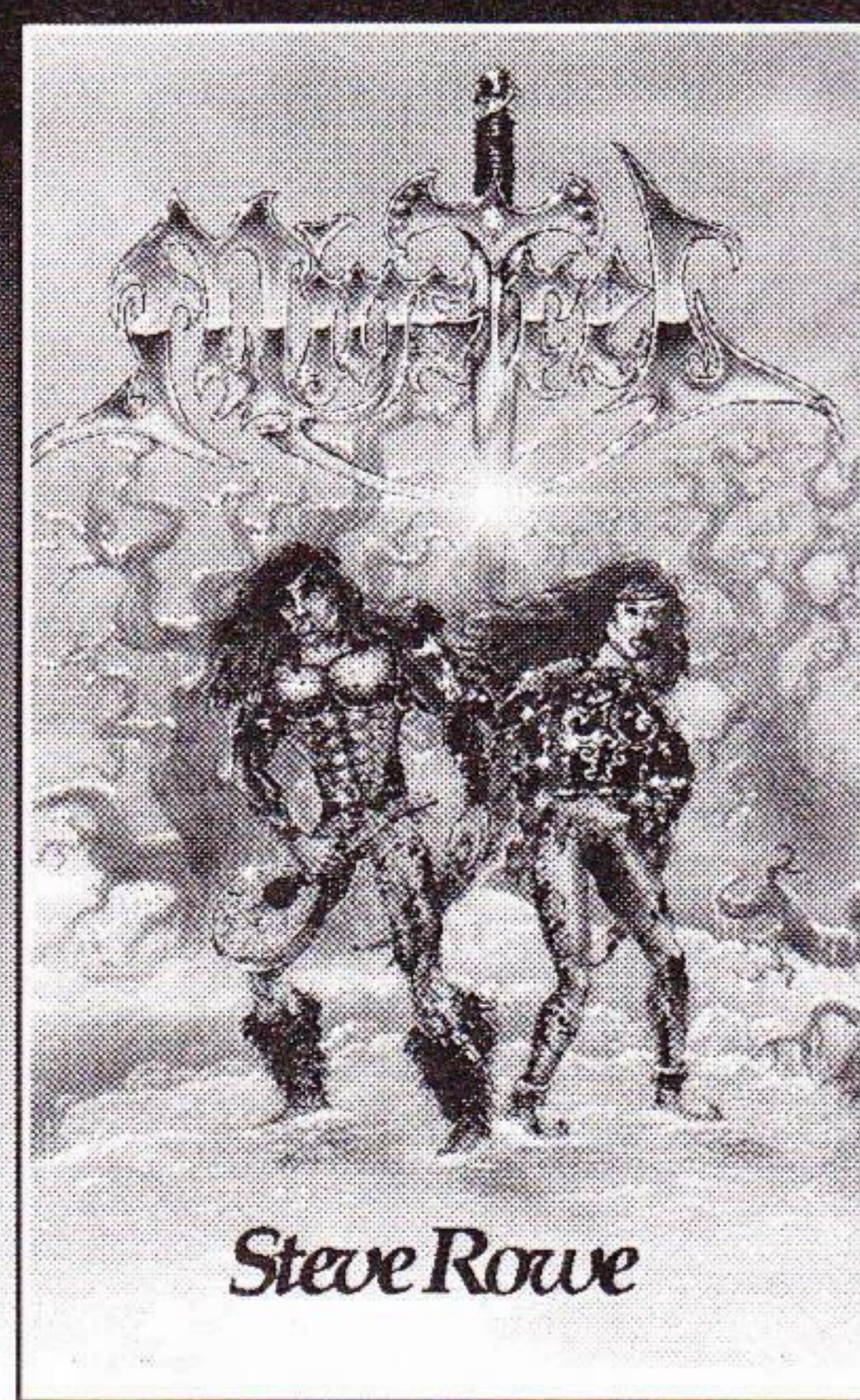


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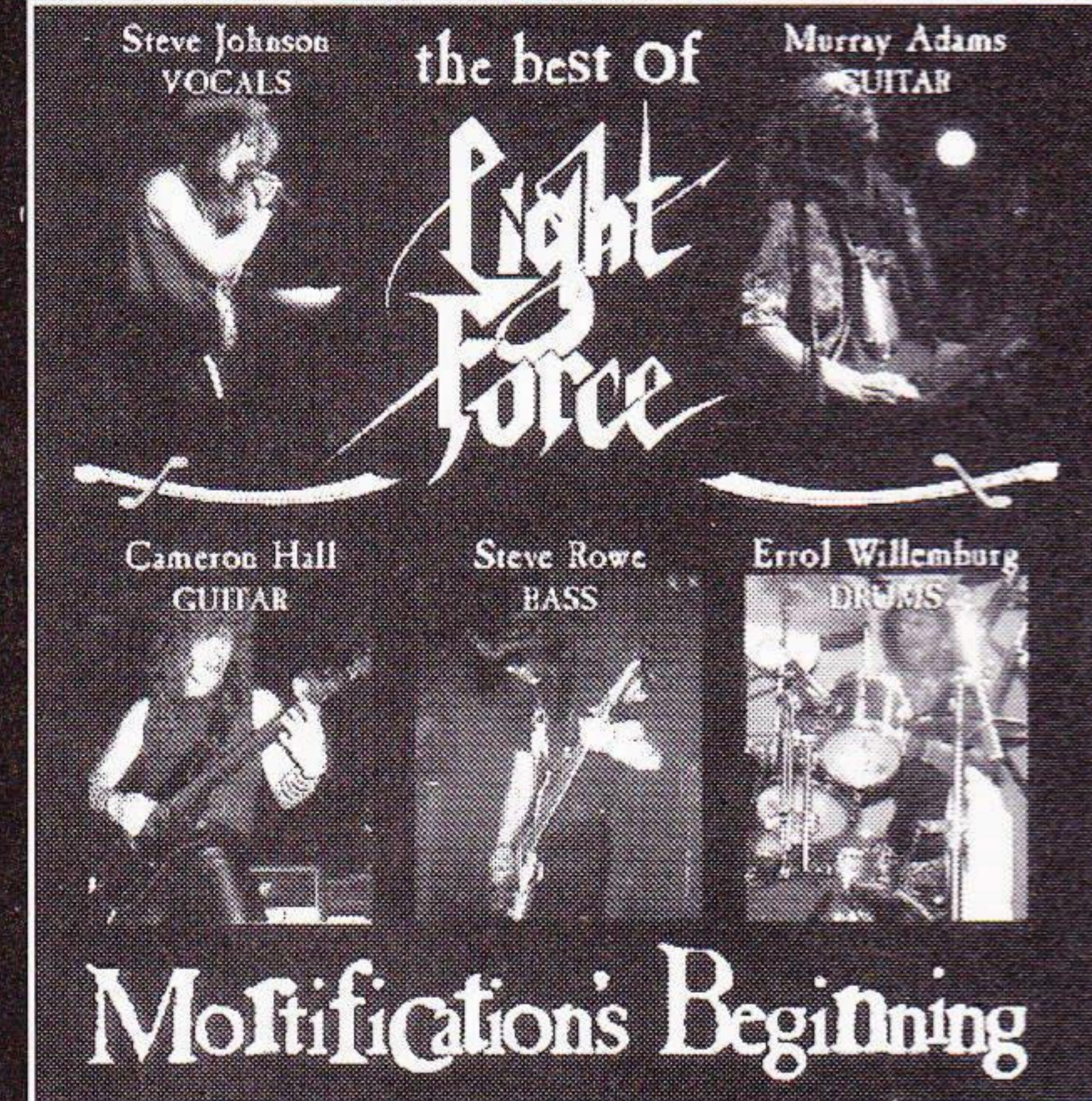
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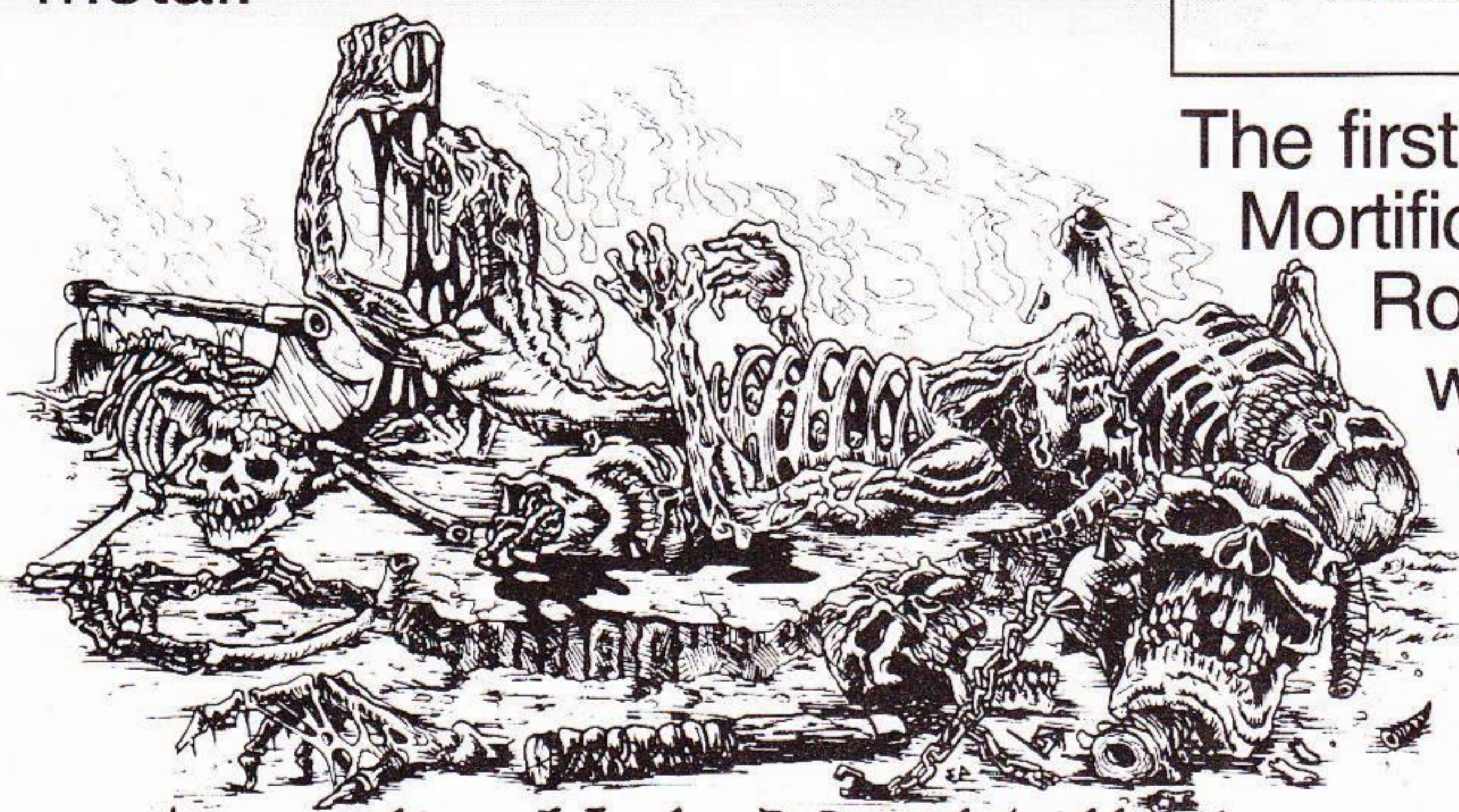


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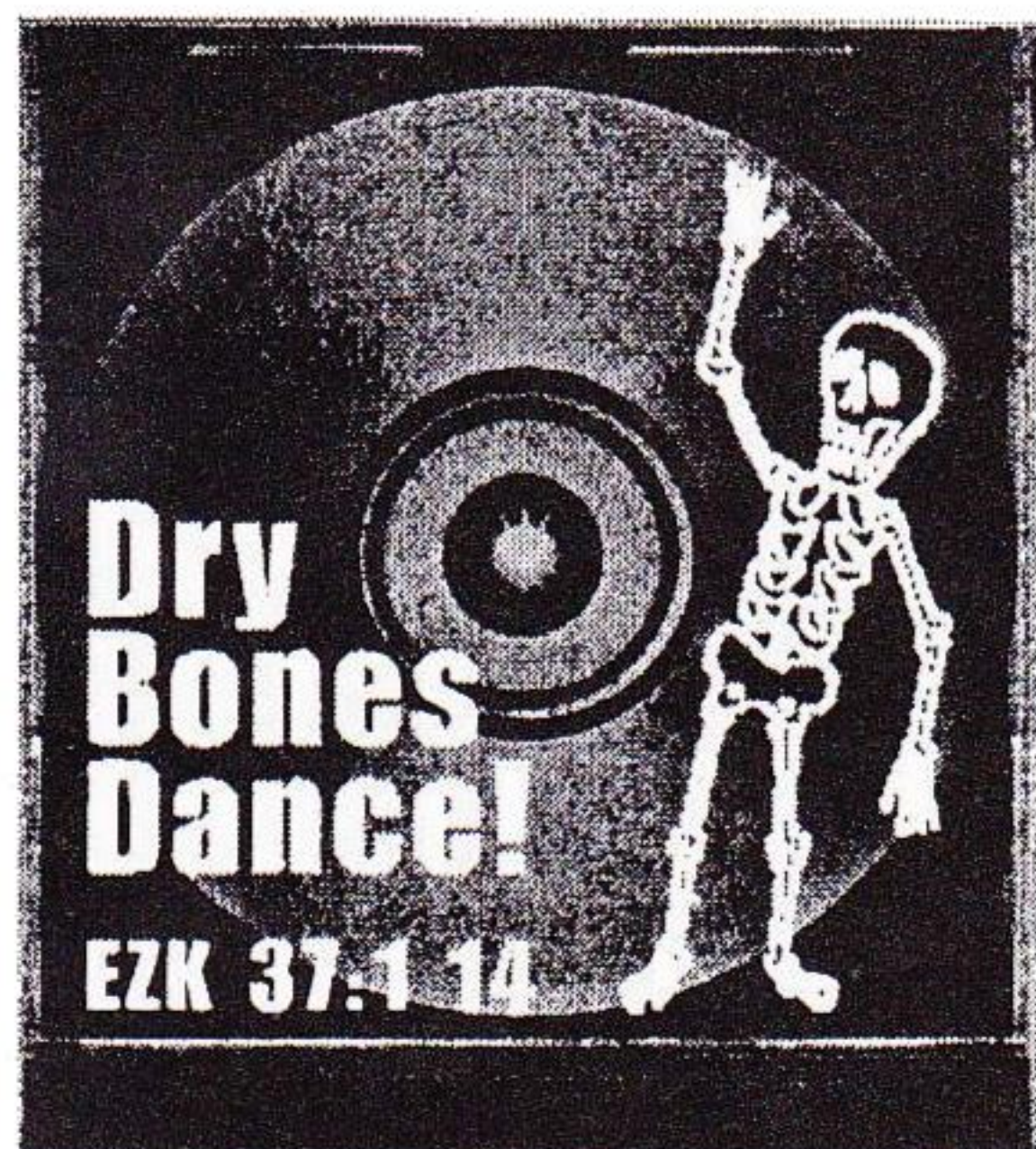
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Walter Eugenest cont'd:

the yard like the FTD florist," says Paul. "Man, we had so many good times! You know, those guys really are as genuine as you can be. They influenced our sound probably not as much as I expected that they would. We had never worked with a producer before, and weren't really sure what to expect. Their main influence came in the guitar tones, because they're both guitar players."

"It was basically just more the tone stuff," says Rick, "because they had a lot of old vintage guitar gear and stuff and really good recording mics."

"They did a good job of capturing live performances where they would just kind of encourage you to go in, do whatever you want to do, not really coach you a whole lot, and just basically capture it," adds Paul.

AS A BAND, WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR NEEDS THAT THE READERS OF THIS MAGAZINE CAN PRAY FOR?

"Well," says Paul, "they could pray for the..."

"Cure for baldness!" finishes

Rick.

"Well," Paul says, "I think

the prayer that I would like to ask your readers to pray for me anyway, would be the same prayer that you would pray for yourself if you were in my position, and that is, 'To whom much is given, much is required.' God has blessed us with the opportunity to share our thoughts and our feelings with a mass amount of people, more than the average person in their lifetime gets an opportunity to do. With that opportunity comes the responsibility of your actions. Pray for us (in the areas of) common sense, wisdom, and guidance, but nothing more special than that." HM



John Schlitt cont'd:

body of Christ has a responsibility. A central message is the first song, 'Wake The Dead.' It's saying there's a generation out there right now that the world has thrown away. There's a lot of experts out there, saying that this generation is lost, but I don't believe it. But I do believe that, right now, spiritually, they're dead. And the only people that can change that is the Christian kids that know Jesus Christ, but are maybe a little complacent. They need to shake the world and let people know by standing strong and letting your light shine, and being a living example of what Christianity can be. These people need to be woken up."

WHAT ARE YOUR UPCOMING PLANS?

"We're finishing the next Petra album, which is dynamite. By the time we get done with that, we start planning the tour for the summer -- both solo and with Petra. I'll probably start writing a lot for the next solo record. Especially since Petra won't be touring a lot this year. I'm able to go out and do a lot of solo shows."

HM

Argyle Park cont'd:

ON THE STEVE TAYLOR TRIBUTE ALBUM?

"Someone wrote to CCM (Magazine) in their feedback column about how bad the album was. Particularly, the letter said, our song was on the edge of being occultic to religious. In the original song, it was the irate Christian winning in the end and the devil losing; but according to this person, our remix has the devil win. Where did you get that from? Do you honestly believe we'd write something like that and try to push it off to a Christian audience?"

TYPICAL. WHAT DOES "BUKA" MEAN?

"I've heard a number of things. I heard Buka is a coffee; I heard it means 'gnarly' in Russian; and other things. It really means nothing. It's me. I'm Buka."

WE SHOULD HAVE THE READERS SEND CCM LETTERS SUGGESTING WHAT "BUKA" MEANS.

(Laughs) "That would be great."

FINALLY, WHAT DO YOU HOPE FOR WITH THIS ALBUM?

"I really hope people listen to the album with an open mind. Christians are so... what word am I looking for?"

"Anal," yells Daren.

"Yeah, Anal retentive.

Everyone is just so quick to point out another brother or sister's fault. Everyone is so willing to talk and judge when someone falls. I don't understand why -- if someone stumbles -- you don't just pick them up and be a friend. I hope with this album people don't judge us and ask why we did this or did that. We didn't do anything -- except be honest. I'm a human and I'm honest. That's reality. There are times in life when things are not grand and great. Bad things do happen -- even at churches. Yet people want to be witch-hunters. I guess Christians must think honesty is a sin."

HM

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Roe Spills His Milk

CURRENT STATUS OF THE BAND?

"The band is getting ready to tour in the Spring time. We are beginning rehearsals immediately for the tour."

WHAT ARE THE CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATIONS FOR THE 77'S?

"We are out of contract, so the band is free and clear. Any takers, come on!"

WHY A SOLO ALBUM?

"I've been wanting to do this for years. Number one: To make a living, because The 77's have depleted my financial resources to the point of almost bankruptcy. Number two: It gives me a lot of freedom musically as well to do all kinds of styles and sounds that either wouldn't fit the band or the band wouldn't have the patience to sit through, because the band is four individuals and not one. I'm just one of four. It gives me a way to do two records a year, instead of one, and a way to go out and earn money on gigs, which is substantial, instead of having to share it with four other guys and a crew. I can just -- like Randy Stonehill -- get an acoustic guitar, fly to someplace and do a show, and walk home with a big wad of cash. It makes much more sense. I can feed my daughter. I can feed myself."

FINALLY FIGURED OUT THAT SECRET, HUH?

"Well, I've always known it, but the band would never let me do it, because they all wanted so badly to be a group more than anything else. I went along with it, but I'm to the point now where I'm as important as the band, and I need to have a life. I'm not getting any younger at this. So, I did it for every reason I could think of, and they're all good reasons. There's

consider it a Scratch Band album. That album should have never gone out under the name of The 77's. But, at the time the record did come out, we all wanted a better name, because we always hated 'The Scratch Band.' Then, after that record came out, the group radically changed. It shifted dramatically from a local church outreach to a rock and roll band with artistic pretention. By the time we did *All Fall Down*, The Scratch Band concept had changed and we were now doing concerts in nightclubs, at colleges. We were getting our own following and our own audience together, and we weren't playing so much in the local high schools and prisons and things like that. So, it was no longer just a church band -- although it was still church-oriented and still supported and funded by that church, as was the third album, *The 77's*. By then, we had graduated to a major label and were working with the Bill Graham people out of San Francisco. We were trying to go big-time at that point. Of course, nothing ever came of it. We ended up breaking up and then re-signing with Brainstorm to do a few more albums and build a home studio, which is what we wanted to do so that we could record demos and continue to try to get a record contract.

"That brings us up to the present with still what we're doing. We're still recording albums that are essentially demos to get a real recording contract. If we never succeed at that, at least we've got our audience and we've put our records out every so often. It's good fun. But, the whole idea was to try to get a deal that would help us to grow and actually make a living. As it is, it's still more or less a ministry and we're all starving."

WHAT'S THE

Michael laughs and exclaims, "Wow! Where was I at? The band was formed at a church by a church. The church leaders wanted a rock and roll group made up of church members for the sole purpose of advertising in the community the kind of concerts that the church was having on the weekends, which were evangelistic. They asked around, and I was one of the people that was asked. That was the first group. We called ourselves The Scratch Band, because we were thrown together from scratch. We did a lot of little tapes and concerts for four years with that name. We were playing high schools, colleges, you name it. I did not particularly care for the group, but it was fun sometimes. It was mainly, though, an outreach of a church. It was not art. It was not anything to do with us, or us doing art. It was strictly pragmatic. It had a reason. It was an evangelistic tool.

"*Ping Pong Over The Abyss* really represents that period. I do not consider it our first album, per se, because I

Rolling into our tenth year in print, it only makes sense to have an interview with singer/songwriter/guitarist Michael Roe, who is finally releasing his first solo album, which comes out at the same time as the long-awaited 77's Boxset. Never a true metal band by any stretch, the music Michael has been belting out the last several years has primarily been real heavy blues rock. Some have tagged the band as "being too alternative for the pop market, and too pop for the alternative market." Truth is, they've really just been a good rock band.

So, find out why Michael's solo album, *Safe As Milk*, deviates from the rock and roll approach, as HM editor Doug Van Pelt chats with Michael Roe late on a Friday night, and get a brief 77's history lesson along the way.

WHY DON'T YOU GIVE ME A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE 77'S AND WHERE YOUR HEAD WAS AT DURING EACH PHASE?

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not one thing that I could think of that would have changed my mind about doing it. I'm really glad I did, because I've had so much fun doing this album. It's been great."

COOL. WHY DON'T YOU TELL ME ABOUT IT? WHAT'S IT SOUND LIKE, AND WHAT IS IT ABOUT?

"Well, as always, there's an enormous variety of material on it. I could go song-by-song. I couldn't describe it in general, except to say that it is very thought-provoking, very challenging, very moody, atmospheric. There's a lot of pop music on it. There's some rock music, but not much. There's a lot of American styles. I would say it's much more comparable to the Lost Dogs, musically, than The 77's. It plays very much like a Lost Dogs album, but it goes much further into the pop realm. There are two songs that sound like they are right off of things you'd hear in a shopping mall. Really hip-hop beats and strings -- very orchestrated thing.

There's songs that sound like they belong on 'Sesame Street.' There's country songs. There's bluegrass songs. There's jazz. There's black Gospel. There's folk, rock, you name it. It's just all over the map -- American music, let's just say."

I WANT TO TEST A FRIEND'S THEORY OUT ON YOU. HE THINKS YOU'VE BEEN HOLDING YOUR BEST MATERIAL BACK FOR THE RIGHT DEAL. HE SAYS YOU AREN'T WRITING THE QUALITY TUNES, LIKE WHEN YOU WERE ON ISLAND. HE SUSPECTS THAT YOU'RE PUTTING OUT MATERIAL THAT'S YOUR SECOND BEST. RESPOND TO THE THEORY.

"It's absolutely untrue. That's not true at all. Believe me, if I was holding stuff back, I couldn't stand it. Although I will say, a lot of these songs on my solo album have

been around for a while -- some of them for years -- but I haven't held them back deliberately. It's been more that either I didn't have them finished enough to record them, or they didn't fit the album that I wanted to put 'em on. Maybe I just never got around to working on it. It's much less thought out than that. It's much more due to laziness and disorganization than calculating some kind of career move. For the most part, my career is as disorganized as my life. I don't sit back with this big master plan. It just sorta happens, and that's probably why I haven't gotten anywhere up to this point! (laughs) If I had a master plan, maybe I would have achieved it by now."

HOW HAS MICHAEL ROE EVOLVED PERSON- ALLY OVER THE LAST TEN YEARS?

"That's tough, because I'm in the middle of a major transition. I'm trying to simplify my life and get away from a lot of the things that have occupied or

depressed me. I've been through a lot of experiences, many of them very difficult. I've learned a heck of a lot. Having a child really made a big difference for me, too. Because, before that, I really was not too happy with life, I think. Having a child made me really want to live long and hard, so I could see my child grow and experience the world through her eyes. It made a big, big difference. It's been harder, but it's been far more rewarding. I don't know. I'm just doing the best I can to try and stumble through. I don't know. That's a big question. I just wish I could answer it in five minutes. I don't even think I could do it in an hour! I'm just doing the best I can to hang in there and see what evolves. I'm learning more about the church, and more about God and His people and His Word, more about music, more about art, more about relationships, more about myself and what I'm doing here. What's this all about? It's just a never-ending process, but I feel more positive than I have in a long time."

HM



Glenn Rowlands

If album releases in the past six months are any indication, the Christian alternative and metal community are going through a resurgence of sorts. The movement is not limited to one geographic area or particular genre; but this influx of quality new artists and material have one thing in common: their independence. Whether signed to small, primarily mail-order labels or none at all, new acts have surfaced from everywhere on a plethora of bigger-label compilations of independent artists. There's rap offerings with N-Soul's *Sanktifikatfyd* and Metro One/Indie Empire's *Microphone Theology*. Hardcore is the theme of Tooth & Nail's *Helpless Amongst Friends*. Metal and alternative acts spice up Ocean's *Light From The Underground* and R.E.X.'s *Demo-Lition II*. And, of course, we would be remiss not to mention the fine little release titled *Heaven's Metal Hard Music Compilation*. For the most part, all these (and other similar compilations) are chock full of acts that have yet to sign on the dotted line of a recording contract with national distribution through Christian book and record outlets. What they do bring to the table, however, are hours of sacrifice and hard work, a heart desiring to reach people for the Lord, and an unadulterated love of their music. For if any of the three factors were missing, the low/no pay for the time spent in practices, shows, and the like just simply wouldn't be worth it.

Independent artists have to be committed to their call; their love of the music they perform, and the chance to express thoughts in hopes of connecting with an audience are unparalleled. And, for that, we applaud them.

What follows are four slices of the life and motivations of the independent artist. Though many are worthy, we chose to take a closer look at Glenn Rowlands, David Benson, Nonpoint Factor, and Crimson Thorn. You may find that the spark that fuels each of these artists is the same spark

that originally drove many of today's major bands and artists into setting the standard for the Christian rock and metal industry. So, keep your eyes open...

Glenn Rowlands

Like many that came before and will come after him, Glenn Rowlands has caught the DIY (do it yourself) flue. Not that it's a bad bug, just one that increases the time and effort placed into succeeding, as well as giving him total control of his chosen walk. As recording artist, producer, promoter and record label owner, Rowlands would seem to have little time for his job that pays the bills -- he's a manager of a plywood warehouse in California. But, it was a frustration with feeling useless after his conversion to Christianity that helped push Rowlands into being so involved.

"When I became a Christian, I tampered with writing songs, but didn't work," he says. "I even went through a period of time where I didn't think there was any such thing as Christian rock 'n' roll. I thought it was evil, so I cut my hair and did a bunch of crazy stuff. But then I thought there was nothing I was doing that was offering any kind of encouragement or edification for anybody else out there in the world."

For Rowlands, it meant going back, picking up his guitar, and looking for some bandmates. He found them and formed Wicked's End, a heavy hardcore group based in Southern California. After about a year and a half together, some things were starting to fall into place -- they released a tape, got a few good gigs here, a few heads turned there. But Rowlands still wasn't quite satisfied. "I started to feel like there was still more that I had to offer," he recalls. "I decided to quit and I started writing."

Up to this point, Rowlands had never really picked up the guitar and

pen at the same time, and it took a step of faith. "I really didn't know if it was going to work," he says. But his first solo cassette, *Under The Desert Moon*, started to showcase Rowlands's songwriting skills without the blasting hardcore backdrop.

Happy with the output, he recalls that, "I felt that there was some potential, and that's when I started to pursue it (songwriting) seriously. And *Time Will Tell* is the full CD that's out now."

Time Will Tell seems worlds away from Wicked's End stylistically. More singer/songwriter-based than any of his previous material, it showcases a maturity both in lyrical perspective and in musical instrumentation (mandolin, slide and acoustic guitars all appear) that may not have been possible with his previous band. At times bluesy, at times tender, at times rockin', Rowlands fuses many elements into the songs to make them work both singularly and as a whole.

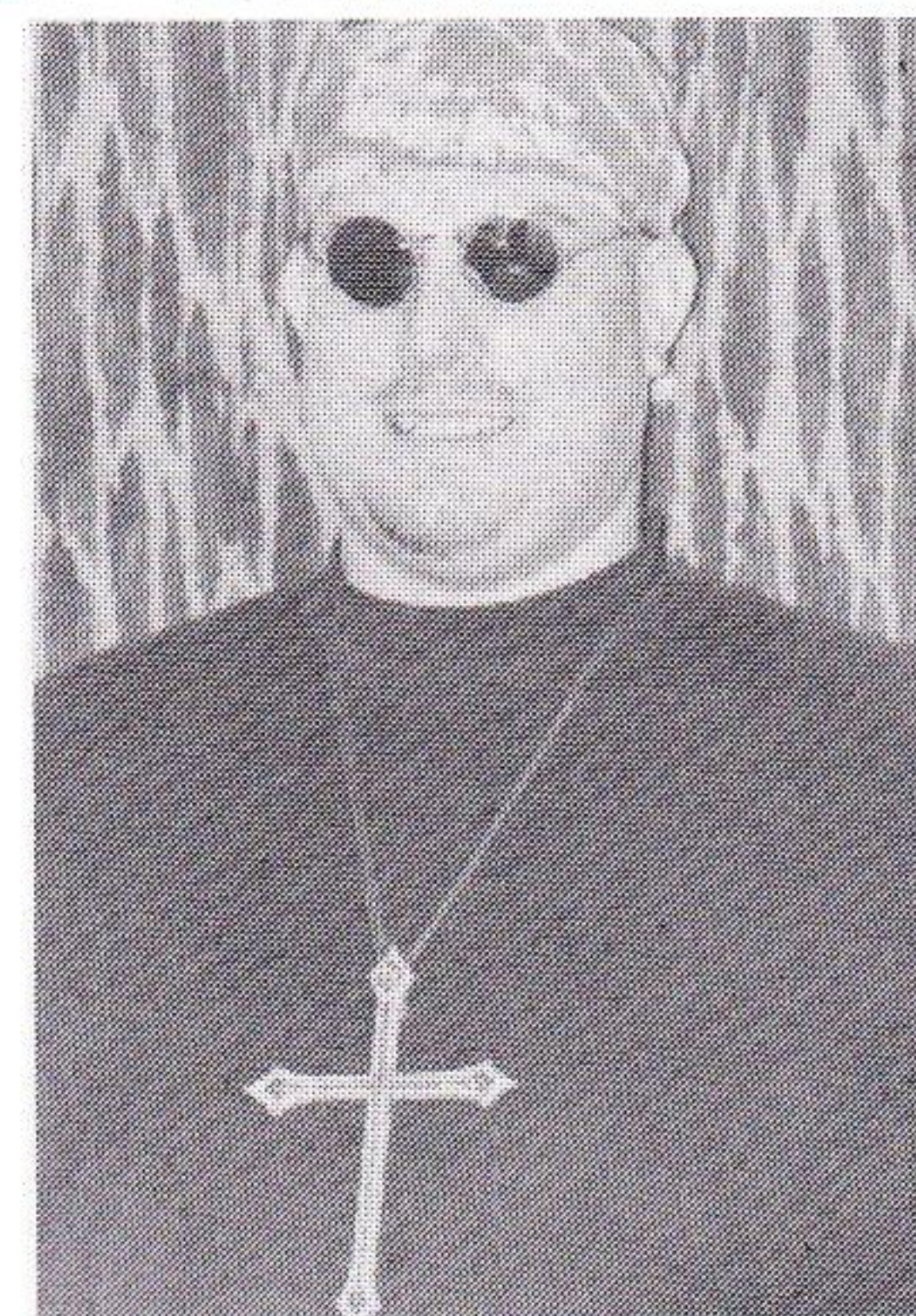
One of the reasons he was able to branch out is Floppy Fish Records, the four-year old label that he founded and still runs. Started with a 4-track recorder, and currently with only two active artists (himself and Fish Tribe, although the currently in limbo Wicked's End's release is available), Floppy Fish is nonetheless a source of pride for Rowlands -- and his guarantee of total creative freedom.

Though currently only performing two to three times a month with a rotating cast of musicians, Rowlands strives for the day when Floppy Fish will be able to support him and his family. Until then, though, be assured that his music is top priority.

"My music, to me, is like a home-cooked meal," he concludes. "I don't write my music or put my music together so that I can get famous or become a star. A lot of people are going to have a hard time accepting what I do anyway, because it's different from the trend. But it's like a home-cooked meal. I took time. I thought it out. I prayed. I spent a lot of money. I put a lot of effort and heart into it. And it's there for the taking. I've made it for people. And that's what makes me happy."

For more info, contact Rowlands/Floppy Fish at: 243 N. Meridian #97, San Bernardino, CA 92410. And don't forget to pass the meatloaf!

Fresh



David Benson

Another solo artist who sacrifices the time-consuming demands for total creative freedom of his own label is Summerville, South Carolina-based David Benson. While Bangin' Music Group is not as old as Rowlands's Floppy Fish, it seems to take a similar approach to giving artists and their music a chance to be heard. Although Benson's own solo project, *Holy Psychotherapy*, is the original focus, for now he wishes to work with a small roster of like-minded musicians interested in spreading the Gospel. Bangin' is currently involved in distributing a release by Jacksonville, Florida-based Apostle, and Benson drops the name of Lisa Faxon, former lead singer of Ransom, as the possibility of a future solo project with the label.

Pursuing this dream for upwards of 10 years, Benson is just now managing to put it all together. "It's just a part of me gaining the insight, as far as the business goes -- to be able to know how to get my stuff out there. I think that's what a lot of bands lack. They have good stuff, they just don't know how to get it to the right people."

Getting your music to the right people is easier for some than others, it seems. For Benson, those right people aren't always whom you think. It so happens that Benson's release came out in Sweden on Viva Records before it came out in the States.

"All I really did was send a tape to them and they loved it," Benson recalls, adding that it's been out in Europe a few months. Viva is the European home of the likes of Jerusalem, XT, and Modest Attraction. Benson doesn't hide his awe for how it all worked out. "They took about two weeks to get back to me, and after that it was more or less a done deal. It pretty much amazed me, really. It was a work of the Lord -- that's all I can say."

Produce

So, what exactly is it that blew away those Swedes? *Holy Psychotherapy* boasts a straightforward, conservative lyrical approach of frustration with the world's ways melded with an Ozzy/Sabbath driving hard rock groove. "It harkens back to the 70's -- very much so," Benson says without an ounce of trepidation.

What does Benson see as criteria in making an impact and an impression on people as he has?

"Having a heart is real important," he says. "All these bands that are out there writing ambiguous lyrics and trying to just do it for the business side of things aren't going to make it. I think that's one of the things that has kept me afloat -- I truly do care about ministry, and God's honoring that. Things are just kinda happenin'. I know that sounds atypical, but it's the truth."

Not surprisingly, those types of artists are who Benson is looking for to be a part of Bangin' Music Group.

"Be sincere about what you're doing. I believe there is a way for bands to make it, but they need to understand that if they're not doing it for the right reasons, then God's not going to honor it. They've more or less put up their own roadblocks."

And, for his own hard-hitting music, Benson also has a few goals, and an observation that demonstrates his commitment. "I really want to see people's lives changed through what I do. I couldn't do music if I wasn't doing it this way; I'd just feel bad about it. There's no way I could be in a secular band."

It's that sense of purpose that makes Benson a successful independent. Contact him at: PO Box 632, Summerville, SC 29484-7092. (800) 803-6894.

Nonpoint Factor

If hardcore/power groove is what you're looking for in an indie, then look no further than the Florida-via-Puerto Rico band Nonpoint Factor. After playing musical chairs with a plethora of musicians (don't all bands do this?), Robert Rivera, drummer and founder, settled on the four-piece of himself, vocalist Kermit, bass player Alexis Benitez, and guitarist Sam Mori in April of '93. Feeling they wanted to branch out of their home country, Rivera and bandmates ventured north to the Fort Lauderdale area later that year. And, unlike Rowlands or Benson, Nonpoint Factor's hook is playing live.

"We're really a live act," Rivera says. "We're always looking for a lot of good bills to be on. The studio is important, too, but live is where you really come across -- you have no studio engineer; it's just you and your instrument. Live is what this band's about -- and spreading our message, what we want to spread."

So, how does a foreign, unestablished act wanting to gain a reputation as a live band get noticed? "It was hard in the beginning," continues Rivera. "People would give us ugly time slots, like at 3 a.m., when nobody's there, or on weekdays when kids are in school. We worked ourselves up very, very slowly, but we got there, and the buzz started. We got nominated for the '1993 Slammie Awards' for 'best thrash band' here in South Florida. After that, among other things, we got an opening slot for Overkill, we went back to PR and were successful, and we've gotten a lot of press."

The buzz is justified -- by all accounts, this band shreds it up live, often in a club setting. Their dedication to the live show and connecting with an audience is part of what makes them unique. They are on the independent A.R.T. Records label, and their debut was an EP titled *Depression '94*, with plans for a new CD in February called *Anger Through An Art Form*. As you can tell, Rivera and his mates make no bones about the personal frustrations and trials they face.

"I write mostly from a personal side of things," Rivera says. "Hopefully, people will catch some kind of vibe to it -- like, 'This is real.' But, it's totally up to the crowd, cause we don't preach at them."

"*Depression* basically dealt with myself. 1993 was a horrible year for



NONPOINT FACTOR

Crimson Thorn



PHOTO: BRIAN RISTOLA

me and the band. We went through a lot of stuff together. The lyrics are actually how I felt during that specific year. There's mentions of the word 'suicide' -- kinda my mind got lost from where it usually was, and that's all I felt. To me, the lyrics are all very self-explanatory, very personal, so hopefully, people will catch on -- that they're not the only ones with problems."

The response within their local scene has been more than they could ask for, Rivera relates. "We've gotten the respect of other local bands, even of the bigger bands that have been here for quite a few years." And the buzz doesn't seem to be letting up. "Right now, we're working on a possible tour for April, so all of that stuff is going to keep us busy."

Being known for your show is quite a compliment. For Nonpoint Factor, what makes it successful?

"First, the sound," Rivera says simply. "We've had problems when we've had bad sound and people can't appreciate the band -- if they can't hear your guitar or your vocals are too high..." But, when those monitors are going haywire, and the mix is as clean as a mudpit, Rivera says Nonpoint Factor implements Plan B.

"We just go completely nuts onstage. Just motivate the crowd. Our singer is a very energetic frontman that gets the people going. Also, the crowd response is always a good indication. As an example, when we opened up for Overkill and Pro-Pain, we started playing, and the place just went berserk. So, that's a good response for us, and you could see it in all of us -- just a lot of enthusiasm involved."

Often in the recording industry, the thing that follows a buzz is a contract. Is this what Nonpoint Factor is after?

"We've had some major Christian label interest," says Rivera, although he claims not to want to know until it's a certainty. "But, for now, we'd rather be on a little label that will actually believe

in our music and what we want to come across as, instead of some big label just giving us a bunch of money just to change." Ahh, another true independent. Nonpoint Factor can be reached at: 9050 Northwest 35th Place, Sunrise, FL 33351.

Crimson Thorn

Crimson Thorn has had similar personnel practices since their start as a five-piece over four years ago. Now down to a slick trio, the Minneapolis-based origins of the band came from the New Union, a weekly live Christian club in the Minneapolis area.

Well, okay, maybe "slick" is the wrong term to fit with the band. We'll let guitarist Miles Sunde do some explaining. When we first started, we were sort of into the thrash stuff; but, for the last few years, we wanted to and felt called for the heavier stuff. And it just kinda slowly but surely evolved into... we don't like to call it this term, but a death metal or grindcore feel. Actually, we like to call it gruntcore -- very brutal and very technical, but at the same time really fast and really hard-hitting."

Gruntcore is a very appropriate term when listening to the band's CD, *Unearthed*. Vocalist and bassist Luke Renno growls his way through the 11 tracks with drummer Kevin Sundberg pounding and Sunde wailing. (Guitarist Paul Jongeward played on the album, but is no longer with the band) Following an impromptu stage appearance at Cornerstone in 1993, the band also played the Sonshine Festival last summer, around the time *Unearthed* was, well... unearthed.

"This album basically revolves around becoming a Christian," Sunde explains. "The title track is kind of symbolic, coming out of the ground, a coming alive to Christ, dead to self type of thing. On the whole, it's real spiritual, fundamental stuff -- real basic. We try not to get too tricky with our lyrics."

Continued on page 29

Industry Profile: Mike Delaney

By Dan MacIntosh

It almost goes without saying that the majority of Christians now accept the viability of a Christian rock ministry. We've gotten past what Daniel Amos called "The Beat Menace" and all those who claimed that rock and roll of any kind is of the devil. Probably only the dwindling numbers of the Southern Gospel Radical Right still cling to these misguided notions. Christian rock (sigh) is here to stay.

A harder notion for the average listener to accept, I believe, is that Christian rock and Christian music in general is both a ministry and a business. I don't know this for sure. In fact, it's hard for me to gauge how much the average listener even thinks about the Christian industry, or if some of its inherent moral dilemmas ever even come up in their conversations. Besides, the listener is at the end of the production line, and usually only sees the final product.

When a consumer purchases a recording, he or she probably assumes that some very well meaning Spirit-filled Christian business people, with much prayer and spiritual insight, have prepared this sealed compact disc as an extension of their dedicated service of God. And, in a loose sense, they in fact have done just that. But, as Mike Delaney of Rad Rockers Distribution -- a company which specializes in hard-to-find and bargain ccm releases -- has learned so well, sometimes the release of a particular recording, and its success or failure, comes down to either good or sometimes bad business decisions. And, when Delaney's company is able to sell the consumer some of the highest quality Christian music available at some of the lowest possible prices, one knows almost immediately -- from a business standpoint -- that something probably has gone wrong. It may have been the

record company's fault for not promoting it properly, or distributors didn't get it to the bookstores, or radio didn't play it, or whatever. It just didn't fly, and that's usually not the artist's fault.

Surprisingly, as the seller of some of the most left-of-center alternative music known to the Christian world, Delaney wasn't always the champion of Christian rock's virtues. "Like a lot of people who grew up fundamentalist," explains Delaney, "I had believed that rock was of the devil. So, after coming to Christ, I trashed my mainstream music collection, thinking it was the right thing to do, and turned my back on the 'demon beat.' But, after Keith Green died, and CCM Magazine did a cover story memorializing his death, I bought the magazine and read the story, since that was the big news in Dallas, where I lived at the time. I was pretty close to Lindale, Texas, where the accident happened. Something about the magazine sparked my curiosity, and I bought the back issue package -- which was pretty complete at the time. And, in a period of a few months, I read all the back issues. In those days, they (CCM) were very apologetic in defending Christian rock against opponents, and I became convinced over the period I was reading those back issues that there was a legitimate place for contemporary Christian music."

Delaney, who is a soft-spoken and contemplative man, soon found his changed attitude affecting the weight of his wallet. "So, I started buying recordings, such as Degarmo & Key, and slowly became convinced that it wasn't unspiritual to have an interest in modern music. And so, like a lot of people, I began to buy -- and eventually collect -- recordings. It soon became clear that some of the things that were interesting were no longer easily available, and you had to search for them. We began to do what

every other collector does, which is scrounge through record stores. Eventually, we discovered other people with like interests."

These "other people" would also become Rad Rockers' customer base. But, before they became his consumers, they acted as his partners. "We began to trade, 'I have extra copies of this, what do you have?' And we started trading back and forth. Over the period of the next couple of years, we started to develop a small circle of collectors. Swap lists would go back and forth, and we would exchange records. That turned into something bigger with the beginning of the Cornerstone Festival."

Cornerstone acted as an "alternative" musical event before the term even came into musical terminology vogue. It offered the kind of musical experiences which were rarely found within church confines. In linking himself with the positive impact that Cornerstone was

having on the Christian music community, Delaney was able to construct one of his business's own cornerstone philosophies. "We've tried to put ourselves in the shoes of some of these enthusiasts who were not satisfied with the range and services offered by the typical Christian retail stores."

From these Cornerstone experiences, Delaney was also able to pinpoint the kind of niche that he could fill in the Christian marketplace -- a void yet to be serviced by the established industry. "We decided that there was potential for us to become the first full-time commercial dealer that specializes in meeting three needs that weren't being met by typical Christian retail stores: A vast selection of classic Christian product from yesteryear at affordable prices -- close-outs; independently released cd's that didn't have national distribution and import CD's; and, thirdly, collectibles that are truly rare and hard-to-find that we learned to





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Rad Rockers cont'd:

auction to the highest bidder."

It is through the first need -- that of providing classic Christian music by obtaining close-outs -- where Delaney has gotten a peek at the inside world of the Christian music business, and where each close-out has its own story. Oddly enough, Delaney has positioned himself in such a way that he ends up actually helping the record company, the artist, and the consumer -- all at the same time. How does he do this?

"We put ourselves in a place that we were so close to the record companies that, when they chose to delete sellers from their catalogues, we would be strategically positioned to solve their inventory control problems by paying relatively top dollar prices to cherry pick titles that we thought had value and deserved better than being thrown away or

being foolishly blown out dirt cheap through Camelot, for example."

Rad Rockers then offers these finds to the consumer at a reasonable price, which saves customers money and all the leg work it takes to find rare recordings. Delaney has also found himself selling some of these recordings back to the artists themselves at a price which is even cheaper than the record companies would sell them for, and this helps the artists to have product to sell on the road. And, when all of these pieces fit together, everyone wins.

And, even if things don't always fall together well, Mike Delaney -- with his heart for Christian music, his respect for what is special and artistic about this music, and his honest business practices -- will always be a winner. **HM**

Fresh Produce Cont'd:

They really can't afford to. Like Nonpoint Factor, Crimson Thorn has pursued opportunities to play clubs and secular shows where, especially in a death/grindcore setting, not all are open to the Gospel of God's grace.

"Actually, we've had some people come up (after shows) and say, 'Hey, we really liked your music -- didn't really particularly care for what you said, but that's where you guys are at, and it's not for me,'" Sunde says. "So, we've had some encouragement from other bands that'll say, 'Keep doing what you're doing, just keep the music heavy.' That seems to be more of an issue with the bands we've played with."

But Sunde admits there are instigators out there. "Of course, they don't like to be preached at or told what to do. So, you get a certain amount of scoffers, or people that come in and throw us some colorful adjectives."

Drummer Sundberg has some familiarity with the extreme scene. He was in a secular band a few years back, playing some of the places Crimson Thorn plays now.

"It's kinda good, being in this band," he says. "I still know a lot of people in the scene and a lot of other bands, so it

gives us a chance to hitch up with them. It's kinda nice to be able to minister the Gospel to a lot of people who don't know Christ.

"I was involved with a lot of drugs and all that, and I was led to the Lord. And it really made me go all out for all these other friends that I'd gotten away from, though I still keep in contact. Everyone deserves the chance; everyone needs to hear the Gospel. That's one thing I like to do coming out of that scene -- is to be able to share with them."

Sunde agrees that it is a big part of committing himself to Crimson Thorn. "If it was just the music, I don't think I'd still be in the band. There's too much stress and money problems, and all that stuff. But, the reward is being able to go out there to sow seeds. Hopefully, you see those seeds become fruit, and see people changed and affected for Jesus Christ, cause there's a lot of people out there. And that's what keeps us going."

You can reach Crimson Thorn at: PO Box 32042, Minneapolis, MN 55432.

So, remember, the next time you think about catching that young opening act -- they could soon be one of the movers and shakers. These are four artists that have the potential to be just that very soon.

HM

#1 FAVORITE BAND OVERALL

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#1 FAVORITE LIVE BAND

What Extreme Sez:

This issue our "What So & So Sez" feature brings back an old friend, Extreme's Gary Cherone. We had a little to catch up on, as well as talk about the band's new album, *Waiting For The Punchline*.

I LOVED *III SIDES TO EVERY STORY*. I'VE WORN IT OUT. MY WIFE DOESN'T LIKE TO HEAR IT, BECAUSE I'VE PLAYED IT SO MUCH. I WAS SURPRISED IT DIDN'T DO BETTER.

"Yeah, you make a record and then it's really out of your hands. It was somewhat frustrating, but, you know... in time, maybe people will discover it. Looking back, the third side is my favorite.

I WISH I COULD'VE SEEN THE TOUR.

"It was fun. It was a little elaborate, because we kind of split the show into three parts, like the record, and we brought the horns out for the last section. It was pretty cool. I'm glad you liked that one.

"The new one is a little different, eh? It's not *III Sides*. It's a little more raw. If you break down all the Extreme songs, then that's probably what you'll get. With *III Sides* and previous stuff, we might have put textures on it and added a lot of sugar. This is raw Extreme.

ARE YOU STILL LISTENING TO CHUCK SWINDOLL?

"Absolutely. He's going to be the chairman of a school (Dallas Theological Seminary). His radio ministry is still going to be going on, but he's moving; so you're lucky (being in Texas)."

I'VE READ ONE OF HIS BOOKS, *GRACE AWAKENING*, SINCE WE LAST SPOKE.

"He's just amazing. You can just understand it when he's talking or when you're reading him. He's not like some other writers. I try to read C.S. Lewis and I have to read a page, like, five times and have a dictionary and a thesaurus. Chuck's the man."

HOW'S YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST GOING?



(L to R): Nuno Bettencourt, Mike Mangini, Gary Cherone, Pat Badger (Photo: Michael Halsband)

"My relationship with Christ? That is the only thing that keeps me afloat. I had some problems, maybe, with depression -- the ups and downs of whatever, the business or the highs and lows of your life -- and I've come to the conclusion, I don't think it's a great big revelation, but it's not necessary that I'm supposed to be happy all the time. There's these ups and downs. I for no reason think I'm Job, but he never lost his faith. I think that's the rock -- the only thing that can't crumble in your life. It's grown. The more I learn, the more I realize that I don't know. It keeps you humble. I love gaining more knowledge about Him. I'm as strong as I am at this point -- stronger than I was when I last talked to you, I feel."

I GUESS THAT'S THE WAY IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE, HUH?

"Yeah. I'm sure with you, and any other Christian, life can smack you in the face every once in a while and life's disappointments can get you down, but that's life. We're not supposed to be the happy, go-lucky guys all the time."

SOME PEOPLE KIND OF

PAINT THAT AS THE NORM, AND I THINK THAT SETS PEOPLE UP FOR A FALL -- WHEN THEY REALLY DO HIT THE STRUGGLES, IT'S LIKE, "IT'S NOT SUPPOSED TO BE LIKE THIS!" AND THEY GET ALL CONFUSED. I'VE SEEN THAT HAPPEN BEFORE, AND IT'S KIND OF A DRAG.

"Right. It's not a magic pill. I think what Christ was talking about is the inner peace. It's not what's outside, with all these things going on, from deaths in the family to financial bankruptcy . . . these things happen. The highs and lows of my life and career -- these things happen. It's really on the surface. One thing that doesn't change is God. If you can keep that in perspective, than the highs and lows of life are trivial."

HOW DO YOU DEAL WITH THE STRUGGLE OF BEING A BELIEVER IN A NON-BELIEVING MUSIC INDUSTRY?

"I think in the past I might've ducked and skirted and avoided the subject. In the past I used to go home at night and say, 'Why should I deny my Savior?' So, I feel a little bit stronger now. As far as this music business, the difference between Christian and

secular... I get annoyed at it, because the thing that bothers me when you profess your faith is that they put you in a little box and they don't want to hear you. You follow me? They have their stereotype. I've been asked, 'Are you a Christian? Are you a Christian?' I don't like answering that question, because 'Christian' is such a general term. Someone in an interview just the other day said, 'Do you believe in God?' I said, 'What is that question?' His interpretation of God could be a four-footed monkey man. The same thing with 'Christian.' You have Jehovah Witnesses and different sects and different factions that proclaim they're Christians, and they're not. I've tried to come up with, 'How would you answer that question? What do you believe in?' I can talk to you and you can understand me, because we have somewhat of the same background, but talking in a secular world, how would a sound byte explain your faith? It's a frustrating thing. I probably went in left field with your question, but those are the things that go through my mind."

I DEFINITELY UNDER-

STAND SOME OF THE FRUSTRATIONS WITH SOME OF THAT... I THINK SOME MEDIA HAVE AN AGENDA AND WHEN THE CHRISTIAN ISSUE COMES UP, IT'S LIKE, "PUT IT IN A BOX AND IGNORE IT" IS THE AGENDA.

"Probably that's the point of (the song) 'There Is No God.' It relates to this question. We're biased. There's no such thing as 'unbiased.' We're all subjected to the knowledge we accept as true. In 'There Is No God,' there's, 'You gather information/As much as you can/and, if you're humble enough to realize that you don't have all the answers/you take the leap of faith,' whether it's in God or in science or whatever. Without being arrogant, I like to turn the question around. Why should they paint me in a corner? Let me question your faith. Where do you come from? It's inevitable with me. Obviously, it's going to come. Before, I was unprepared. I probably sound unprepared, but there's too many things going on in my head when these questions are asked. From a secular standpoint, I just want to shut up, because anything I say they're going to twist and turn or paint me in a little corner and no one's going to want to hear our music."

I THINK THAT'S THE KIND OF THING THAT JESUS FACED. YOUR APPROACH IS KINDA LIKE HIS APPROACH. HE TRIED TO TURN THE TABLES AROUND AND, YOU KNOW, ASKED WHERE THEY WERE COMING FROM. OFTENTIMES HE GAVE THEM MIND-BENDING PUZZLES THAT THEY COULDN'T FIGURE OUT AND THEY WENT AWAY. HE DIDN'T LET 'EM PUT HIM IN A BOX.

"I think that's probably the root of the ambiguity in the lyrics. I see, personally, getting heat from both sides. But that's okay. I'm trying to be honest with myself and my faith and put it up for grabs. I know where I'm coming from with these songs. Throw it out and some people are gonna dive into it; some people it's just going to be meaningless jargon. Who am I to say it isn't to them? It's just stuff that I think about, that's all."

I JUST WANT TO LET YOU KNOW THAT I DEFINITELY SUPPORT WHAT YOU'RE DOING AND WHO YOU ARE. IF YOU EVER NEED SOME SUPPORT OR ENCOURAGEMENT, GIVE ME A SHOUT.

"Thanks Doug. Now I have your Texas number. How do you deal with it? Do you have these same avenues with such a title as 'Heaven's Metal?'"

YEAH. PEOPLE DON'T INTERVIEW ME A LOT FOR HEAVEN'S METAL. MAYBE SOME DAY THEY WILL AS CHRISTIAN MUSIC GROWS. FROM THE SECULAR MEDIA I DON'T GET IT A LOT. I TALKED TO SOME PRESS PEOPLE IN DALLAS. I WAS AT THIS BIG THING CALLED "PROMISE KEEPERS," WHERE CHUCK SWINDOLL WAS AT, AND THERE WERE SEVERAL PEOPLE FROM THE NORMAL, MAINSTREAM PRESS THERE. AND THEY WERE REAL INTERESTED IN WHAT I WAS DOING AND REALLY LISTENED TO WHAT I HAD TO SAY AND DIDN'T SEEM TO PUT ME IN A BOX. BUT, SOME OF THE HEAT THAT I GET IS FROM, LIKE, THE OTHER SIDE OF THE FENCE. IF I VOCALLY GIVE YOU MY SUPPORT IN THIS INTERVIEW, THERE'LL BE A COUPLE PEOPLE -- JUST A HANDFUL OF NOISY PEOPLE -- WHO WILL SAY, "HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT HIM WHEN HE DOESN'T TALK ABOUT JESUS IN EVERY SONG," OR "HE DOES THIS OR THAT." SO, I'LL GET SOME OF THE HEAT FOR THAT -- WHEN SOMEONE'S NOT "CHRISTIAN ENOUGH." IT'S A SILLY ARGUMENT. IT'S NOT AN ARGUMENT ABOUT THE TRUTH. IT'S REALLY ABOUT STYLE AND CULTURE IN A LOT OF WAYS. I GUESS I HANDLE THAT BY TRYING TO GIVE AN INTELLIGENT DEFENSE TOWARDS SOMEONE WHOSE APPROACH ABOUT ART IS DIFFERENT, AND KIND OF BOIL IT DOWN TO WHAT THEY WANT TO SEE. THEY REALLY WANT TO SEE, I THINK, "IS THIS PERSON COMPROMISING?" AND I WANT TO TRY AND HELP PEOPLE AND SAY, "OKAY, LET'S SUPPOSE FOR A SECOND THAT THEY MAY BE COMPROMISING. LET'S ANALYZE IT," AND TRY TO SHOW THEM THAT THEY'RE NOT OR THAT, IF THEY ARE COMPROMISING, THEIR APPROACH TO CORRECTING THE PERSON IS TOTALLY OUT OF PLACE.

"In answer to some of

these questions about approach: There's not a day that goes by in my life -- whether it's music or walking through the street or hanging out with a bunch of buddies -- that you better be aware of compromise. You don't have to be playing music or singing about Jesus to compromise. You could be hanging out at a cafe with four or five people and things get said and silence is also a compromise. Every day it's a question. I question if I'm compromising. At the end of the day . . . at the beginning of the day, too, I get on my knees and say, 'Do not let me deny my faith.' Some times I have better days than others. Today, I felt comfortable in talking to you, because I know you, but also there was an anxiety of the questions. This is the stuff that makes you tick -- makes me tick. We've had a couple weeks of press and sometimes an interviewer will just not be prepared, or know nothing of your music or what you're saying, and it's, like I have a choice: I can either dive into this in this half-hour that I'm giving; or it's just not worth it to talk, because I'll spend half the time telling where we got the name Extreme, and then I'll have five minutes to dive into what we're saying -- and it's just not worth it."

"THERE IS NO GOD" SEEMS KIND OF LIKE A FOLLOW-UP TO THE SONG "GOD ISN'T DEAD" FROM THE III SIDES ALBUM.

"Lyrically, the connection starts way back with 'Hole Hearted' way back on *Pornograffiti*. I thought the third side of *III Sides*, from 'God Isn't Dead' to 'Rise And Shine' to 'Am I Ever Gonna Change' to 'Who Cares?' kind of like was the continuation of the 'Hole Hearted' theme. In 'There Is No God,' I think the correlation is just in title. Obviously, they relate. I tried to pick apart the lyrics and I've pitted religion verses science and the parallels that they have and the leap of faith that you have to take with both. You know what? I'm glad I have to take this leap of faith of believing in God. I don't think God would have it any other way. You know, you hear that

argument, 'Well, if there is a God, why doesn't He come on television and show us?' Coincidentally, I just read something in Romans this morning about how men profess to be wise, but are foolish and that God makes Himself known. The creation of God is the evidence of God, you know? If you can't see that, then you're blind and you're letting your intellect be your God -- and that's pretty vain -- you have to have a pretty big ego. That's 'There Is No God.' That title . . . I don't know where it came from. Obviously, it probably came from the paraphrase from Time Magazine's headline -- 'God Is Dead.'

"I could easily say it's devil's advocate (and) I'm playing the role. I don't think it's so much a devil's advocate. It ends up being a question. I'm sure you have friends or you like to have heated debate when it comes to evolution and stuff like that. I guess that's one of my pet peeves. The amount of faith that it takes -- the leap of faith you have to take -- to believe in an ameba coincidentally, by chance, evolving into a human being. This Carl Sagan quote: 'billions and billions of years...' Does he realize what a billion is? I might be babbling here, but it's always interested me."

HOW DID THE AUDIENCE RESPOND TO III SIDES?

"Fans, I think stuck with us in what we did. Whether they thought we were experimenting, I thought we broadened our horizons somewhat with that. Actually, it was something we wanted to do on the first record, but we just couldn't afford it. I'm glad it took those three years to do. The reaction of *III Sides*... I don't know. When I think of *III Sides*, I think of the third side. You know where those lyrics are coming from. I wonder if our audience does, because I plagiarized the Bible with some of those lyrics (he laughs), which I think is the only way you can't go wrong."

DID YOU HAVE ANY REAL REACTION TO THE LYRICS FROM ANYBODY IN PARTICULAR?

"Umm. I thought the press was pretty kind to the band.

There was one article that I still have, and it encourages me. It was written by Ann Powers from the New York Times, who talked about 'heavy metal aligning itself up with the devil . . . and these characters from Extreme seemed to be aligning itself up with the other deity.' If you consider the devil a deity? I don't, but you know what I mean. That's something I keep to encourage me. When things get down, I read it and I go, 'Okay, well someone gets it out there.' I don't know if it got the attention that I thought it would."

YOU MENTIONED A LITTLE BIT ABOUT THE TOUGH TIMES YOU'VE HAD. DO YOU WANNA ELABORATE ON ANY OF THAT?

"My tough times? We got off the road in late '93. We started our new record and things were going well recording the record. In the process of recording that record, Paul Gary, our drummer . . . it came to a head, as far as his passion for the music and his passion for doing something else, so we called him on it. We all came to an agreement -- the four of us -- that he'd go his way and start his management company and do that, because there was a passion there. We were looking for a passionate drummer. So, we parted ways and, believe me, you hear it over and over, 'They parted amicably.' Paul's been my friend for 15 years and I've been in 8 or 9 bands with him, so I love him and I wish him well. So, we had to get a new drummer. Here comes Mike Mangini, who we've known and who has been waiting in the wings for 8 years. We've been fans of his local bands and stuff like that. So, these are little sub-facts. We got rid of our manager. (There were) two different visions. That I could go into forever, but it just wasn't working, so we moved on. The year was spent interviewing manager after manager -- all these things that are separate from music, which kind of takes you away from your passion. It seemed like it was engulfing us. Then that bled into the insecurities with the record company.

You know, 'These guys are four chickens without any heads.' We made a special trip out to L.A. to calm things down. We're floating now. If it was all to go, I would deal with it; but it was a tough year for Extreme as a band.

"Did you know the good thing about this year was I did *Jesus Christ Superstar*. The music was great and I worked with some local artists in Boston -- a small Boston rock opera. I had a chance to act. Will I ever do it again? I don't know. It depends on the reviews . . . who knows (laughs). Saying that, in retrospect, 'the woes of the band!' Maybe it wasn't as bad. Maybe it had to happen for us to get where we are now."

SOME OF THE PEOPLE THAT READ MY MAGAZINE, WHO LISTEN TO CHRISTIAN MUSIC. . . I'M SURE, IF THEY GOT THE /// SIDES ALBUM, THAT THEY HAD A PROBLEM WITH ONE OF THE WORDS IN "WARHEAD." AND, IN THE SONG, "CYNICAL" (FROM WAITING FOR THE PUNCHLINE). WHAT'S YOUR ATTITUDE ON SWEAR WORDS?

"I knew you were going to ask this question! Would I try to answer it? What's my take on swear words? For people who do and people who practice it, it's just a lack of vocabulary, which I can be guilty of. 'Cynical,' which you saw on the lyric sheet (on the advance cassette), has been changed. But not that I don't say it. If it wasn't written, would you have heard it?"

UHH, PROBABLY NOT. THERE'S THAT ONE PART WHERE I THINK YOU'RE SINGING IT, AND YOU'RE KINDA CARRYING THE NOTE OUT.

"At the end. I did say it (f-word) and I don't deny it. I mean, I don't have a reason for saying it or not saying it. I don't like it. The only answer would be that I'm guilty of cursing. I'm not a fan of someone who curses. When I hear it on record, I wonder why. But, in defense of it, sometimes I don't think there's any other word for it. I don't think that any other word could be stronger. 'Cynical,' as a

song, is kind of like that futile, nihilistic attitude, like on 'Tell Me Something I Don't Know.' I'm not that person, but I think someone who is . . . what other definition would you have? By no means am I trying to defend what I said. It's there. What do I think of it? I don't know. With a few of my lyrics . . . In 'Am I Ever Gonna Change' I swear in it."

REALLY? I'VE LISTENED TO IT A MILLION TIMES AND HAVE NEVER HEARD IT.

"Yeah. I'm surprised you didn't get it. It says 'futile fight' in the lyrics, but 'this futile fight' was replaced by the other f-word. I don't know. It's an emotion. (long pause) That's a part of me. I'm honest. I get emotional when I sing and sometimes that happens. I don't know. I think it would be a little bit of a lie if I wasn't honest with myself, and then I'd be deceiving everybody. I think the point is made. I don't necessarily like to do it, like in 'Get The Funk Out.' Does it really matter what I say? Isn't it the same sentiment? Are we dealing with semantics here? I'm not trying to convince you. It's just there. That definitely would be interpreted as a compromise. In my life, there's probably more important things than that, which I would consider a compromise for my faith. That's the question, like you said, you're probably going to get some grief from some people from my approach. Who knows? Maybe it'll change. I know it won't get worse.

"Go ahead, ask me more about this. Get in there. You're holding back, Doug. This is horrible. You're compromising. (laughs)"

I CAN'T THINK OF WHAT ELSE TO SAY. I THINK THERE'S A THEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT TO BE MADE. SOME PEOPLE CAN ARGUE THAT, "HEY, IT'S OKAY. IT'S A FORM OF SPEECH," AND ANOTHER PERSON CAN ARGUE AND SAY, "HEY, IT'S UNWHOLESOME. IT'S WHAT JESUS TALKED ABOUT HERE." I DON'T SIT HERE IN JUDGEMENT OF YOU.

PERSONALLY, I'LL LISTEN TO "WARHEADS," BUT I DON'T FEEL AS GOOD ABOUT PLAYING THAT SONG OVER AND OVER AGAIN AS I DO ABOUT ALL OF THE OTHER 13 SONGS OR WHATEVER. SO, FOR ME, IT KIND OF BOTHERS ME TO HEAR THAT; BUT I DON'T SIT HERE AND SAY, "OH! WHAT A BAD PERSON. HE MADE THIS MISTAKE." ON THE OTHER HAND, THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO THINK THAT CUSSING AND DRINKING AND SMOKING ARE THE THREE WORST SINS A PERSON CAN COMMIT. I THINK THE RESPONSE FROM SOMEBODY WHO FEELS THAT WAY MIGHT BE A LITTLE MORE LENIENT TOWARDS HATRED TOWARD YOU THAN LOVE AND ACCEPTANCE, WHICH I THINK IS WRONG, TOO.

"In our culture, it's considered a swear word and it's a vulgarity, and we could sit down and define everything. We could put all the do's and don'ts down. There's hypocrisy there, because I'm not a fan of it. I can't think of anyone. Maybe the Rolling Stones. That song, 'Some Girls' . . . the whole thing was pretty wild. When I was a teenager, I thought it was cool, but now it's all over the place. The Pandora's box has been opened. I don't mind that it bothers you. It makes me think. That's great."

WHAT DIRECTION IS THE BAND GOING RIGHT NOW?

"Well, the record's coming out January 17th. We're shooting a video two days from now. We're getting ready to go overseas and do some promo. We'll be touring extensively in the U.S. starting in February. In the past we neglected the States. That's probably one of the reasons we got rid of our management. So, we're gonna concentrate on the States. Wherever we play and how big it is really doesn't matter. Where the band is strong, we'll play theaters; and the places that don't know us, we'll play the clubs. Whatever we have to do, God willing."

HM

PRECIOUS DEATH

PRECIOUS DEATH



southpaw

**A BIG THANK YOU TO
ALL P.D. FANS FOR
ANOTHER KILLER YEAR**

IF YOU MUST



Photos : Larry Bolen

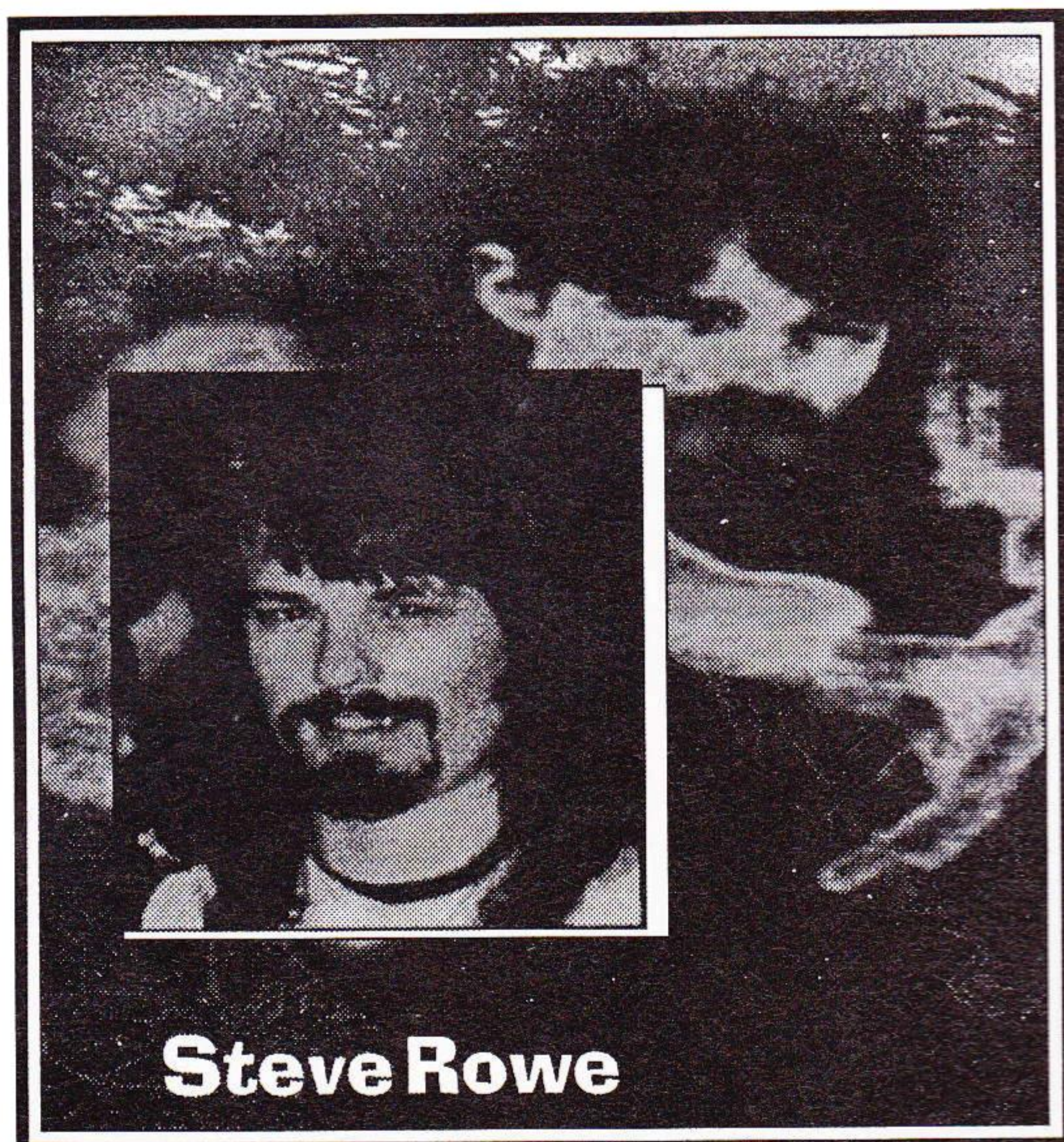
METRO ONE 2025 W. Balboa Blvd. 2nd floor Newport Beach, CA 92663 Tel. (714) 673-6701 Fax.(714) 673-6772
E-mail: RBJAM@aol.com Bookings: DLB Management (714) 863-9632 Management: NCI (818) 558-7503
Merchandise: P.O. BOX 668 Lomita, CA 90717-0668 Tel. (310) 539-5673



Reader's

You, the readers, have spoken, and the results are in!

Check out who your peers' favorite artists were in 1994.



Steve Rowe

Favorite Bassist

1 Steve Rowe

- 2 Victor Macias
- 3 Doug Pinnick
- 4 Andy Koehler
- 5 David Bach

Favorite Album

1 *Vanishing Lessons* Tourniquet

- 2 *Scarecrow Messiah*
Bride
- 3 *Southpaw*
Precious Death
- 4 *Struggle*
Six Feet Deep
- 5 *Stone*
Sometime Sunday

Favorite Indie/Unsigned Band



1 Sardonyx

- 2 Scaterd Few
- 3 P.O.D.
- 4 Ultimatum
- 5 tie: Oblation
& Seraph
& Mr. Bishop's Fist

King James



Favorite New Band

1 King James

- 2 Red Sea
- 3 tie: Sometime Sunday
& Six Feet Deep
- 4 Precious Death
- 5 Blenderhead

Favorite Producer

1 John & Dino Elefante

- 2 Terry Taylor
- 3 Jim Faraci
- 4 tie: Blood
(Jyro & Jerome)
& The Trauma Team
(Kurt Bachman &
Joey Daub)
- 5 Scott Albert

Poll 1994

Favorite Band

1 Bride

- 2 Tourniquet
- 3 Mortification
- 4 Guardian
- 5 Precious Death

MICHAEL'S PHOTOGRAPHY



Favorite Singer

1 Dale Thompson

- 2 Christopher Scott
- 3 Michael Sweet
- 4 Luke Easter
- 5 Mike Lee

Favorite Live Band

1 Bride

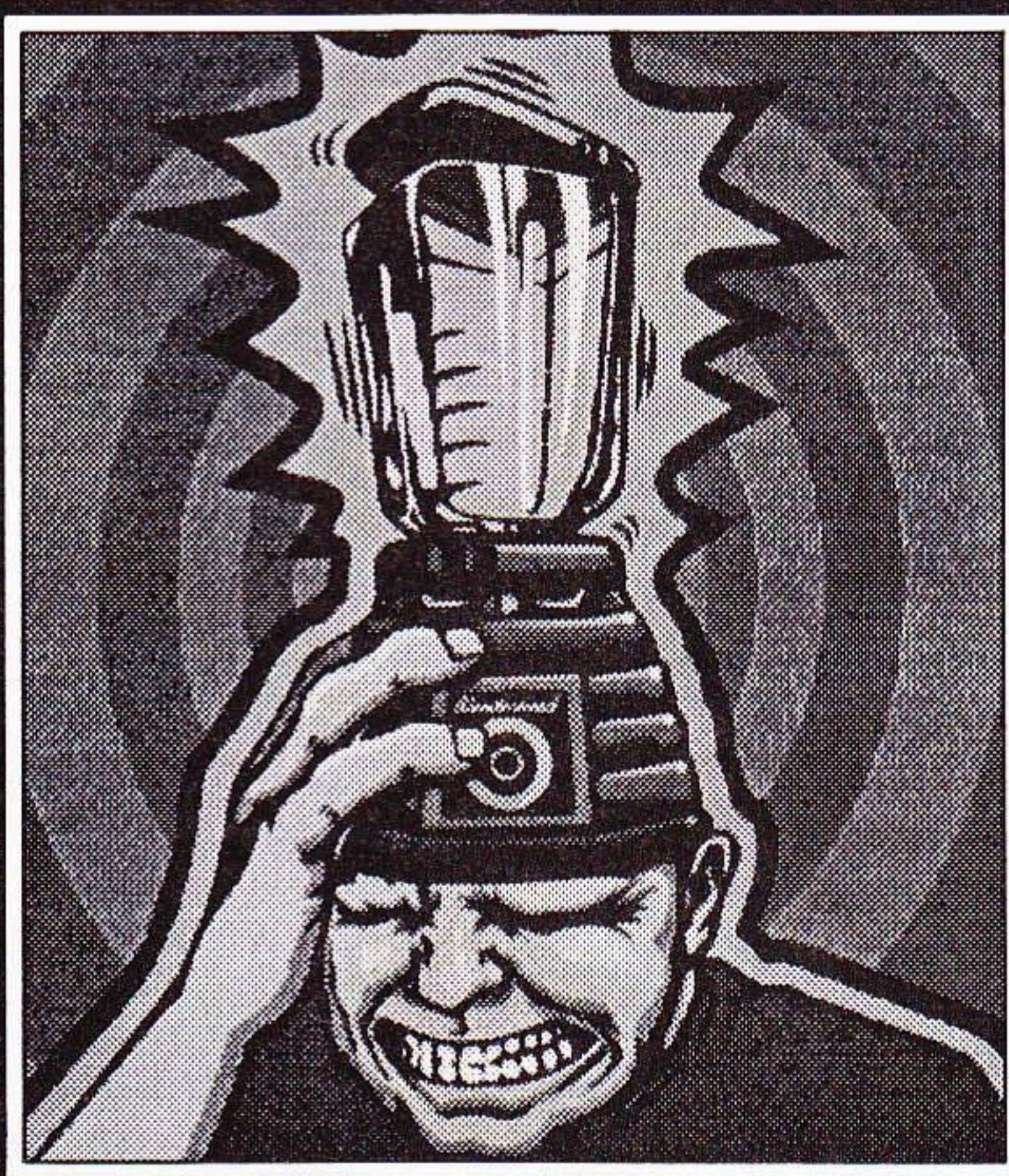
- 2 Mortal
- 3 Guardian
- 4 Tourniquet
- 5 Circle of Dust

Favorite Lyricist

1 Ted Kirkpatrick

- 2 Jimmy Brown
- 3 Steve Rowe
- 4 Steve Taylor
- 5 Eric Clayton

Favorite Album Cover



1 Prime Candidate For Burnout

Blenderhead

- 2 *Vanishing Lessons*
Tourniquet
- 3 *Blood World*
Mortification
- 4 *Blood*
Red Sea
- 5 *Inhabit*
Living Sacrifice

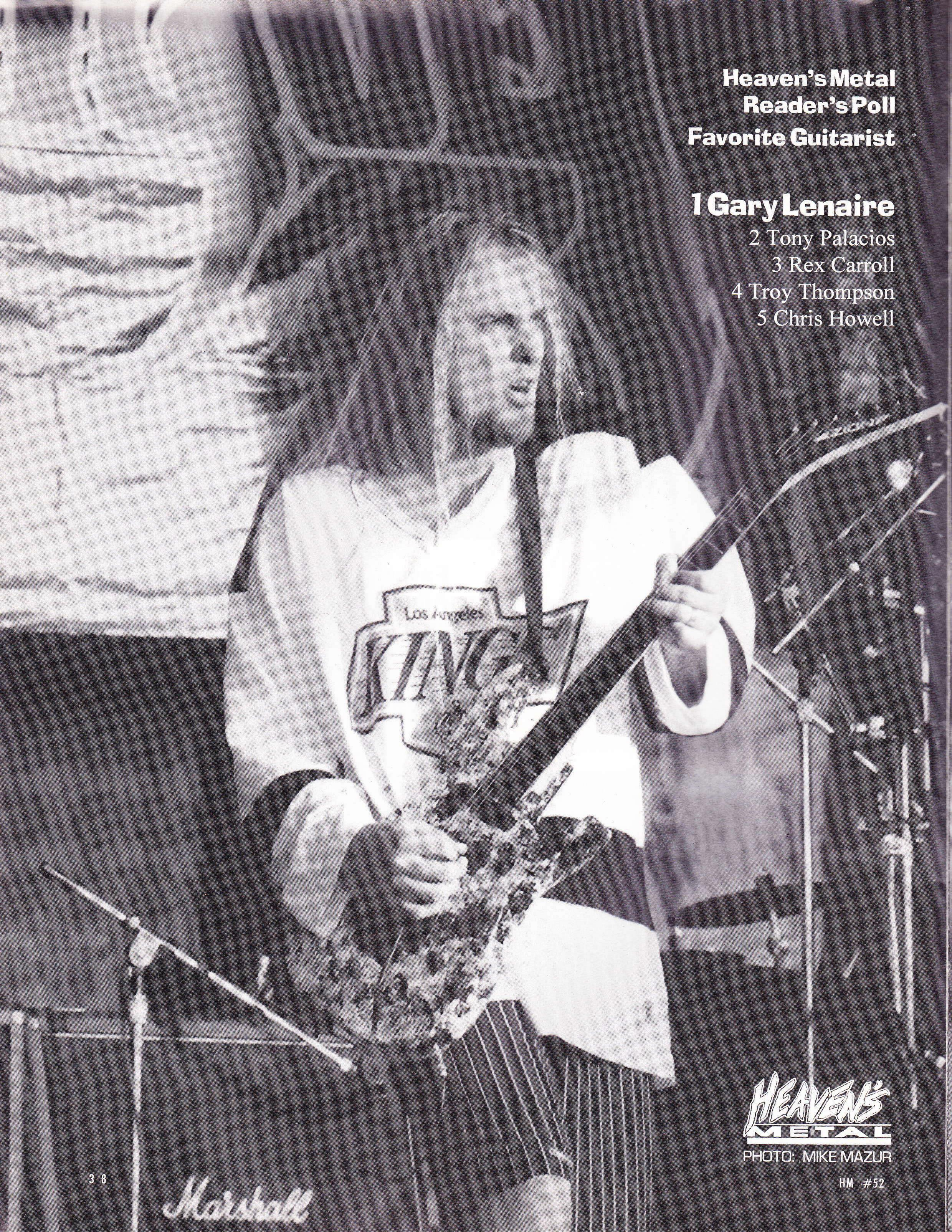


The 15 winners of our Reader's Poll Giveaway, who received a copy of the awesome *Extremely Loud Guitar* book and cd, were: Lenny Spinelli, from Luzerne PA; Matthew Holmes, from Marietta GA; Jarod J. Graves, from Renton WA; Josh McDonald, from Tampa FL; Derek Chalfont, from Farmland IN; Stephen Parady, from Holy Road KS; Charlie Casteel, from Moultrie GA; Henk Nennie, from The Netherlands; Mike Lynch, from Albuquerque NM; Jamie Coward, from Rockdale TX; Josh Fielding, from Newkensington PA; M. Rachel Cowin, from Yakima WA; Allen King, from Canton NC; Helmut Hinck, from Bremervorde, Germany; and Joe Scalzo, from Mogadore OH. Special thanks to Star Song for supplying the goodies to giveaway. **HM**

**Heaven's Metal
Reader's Poll
Favorite Guitarist**

1 Gary Linaire

- 2 Tony Palacios
- 3 Rex Carroll
- 4 Troy Thompson
- 5 Chris Howell



**HEAVEN'S
METAL**

PHOTO: MIKE MAZUR

HM #52

Favorite Drummer

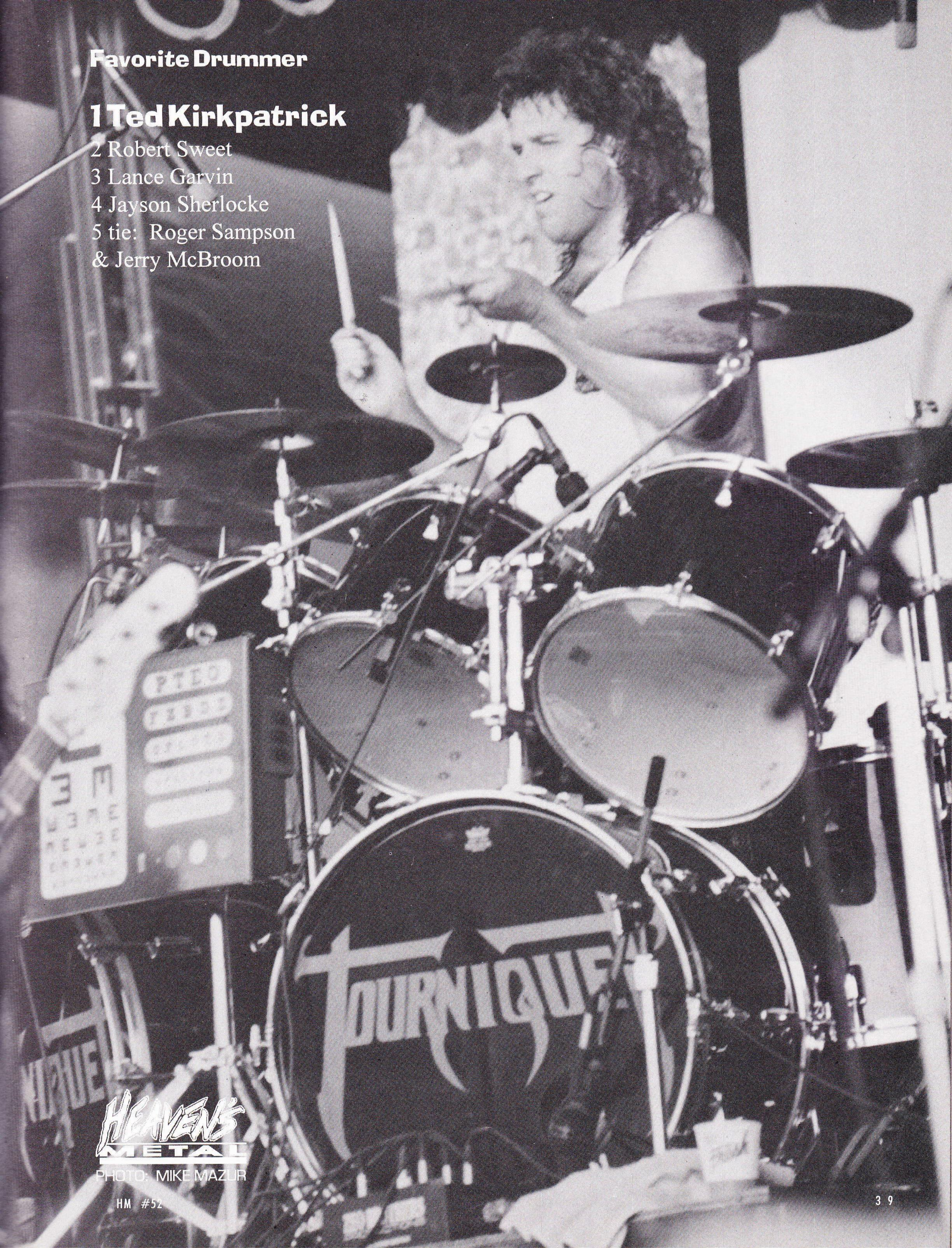
1 Ted Kirkpatrick

2 Robert Sweet

3 Lance Garvin

4 Jayson Sherlocke

5 tie: Roger Sampson
& Jerry McBroom



**HEAVEN'S
METAL**

PHOTO: MIKE MAZUR

METAL TRACKS

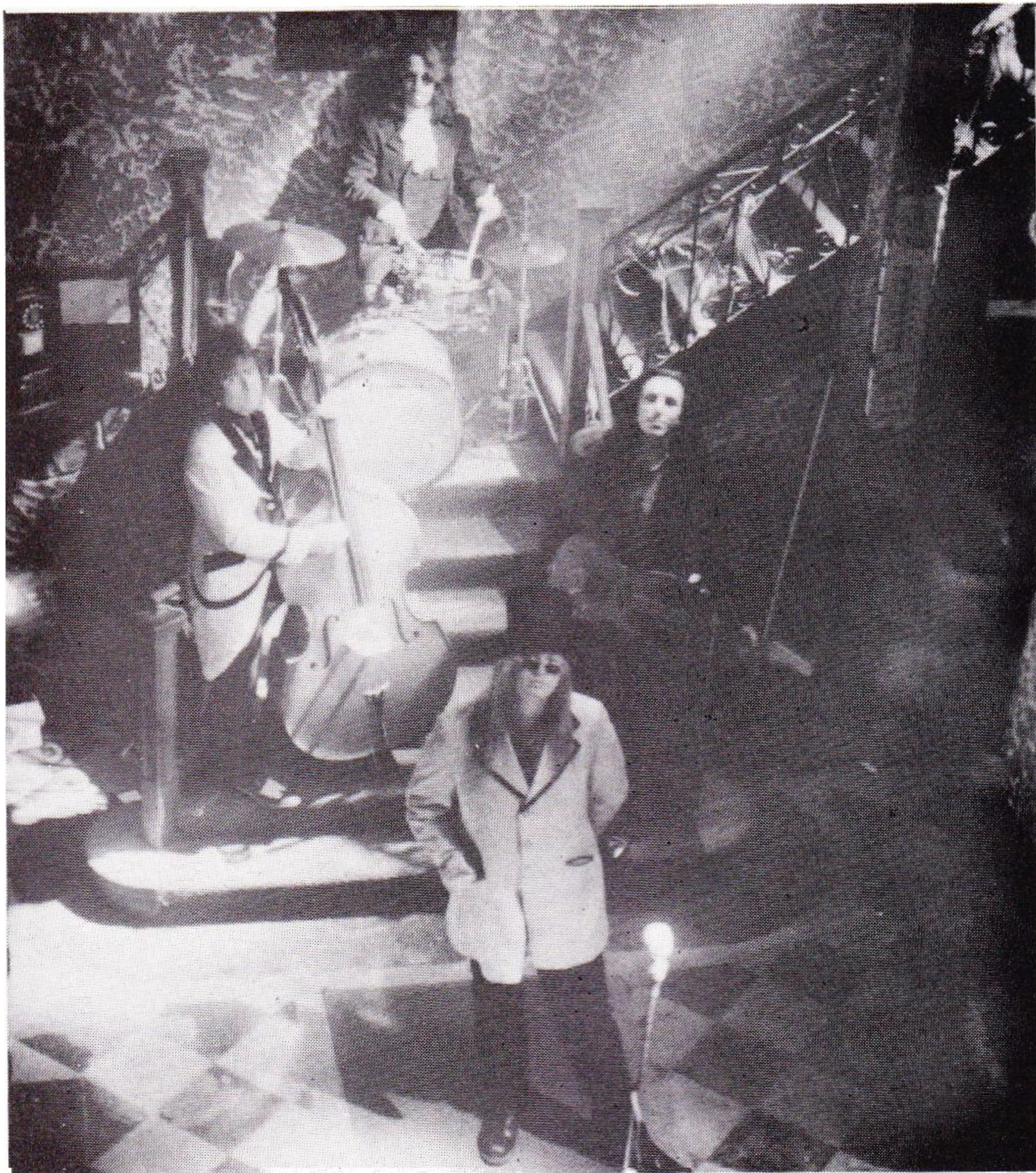
The list of confirmed acts at the mighty Cornerstone Festival thus far are: **Six Feet Deep**; **PFR**; **Jerusalem** (which, we're convinced, promises to be one of those passionate "you can feel God's presence" concerts); **Fleming & John**; **Glenn Kaiser** (solo set); **Jason & The G-Men**; **Lost Dogs**; **Steve Taylor**; **Argyle Park**; **Klank**; **Circle of Dust**; **Vector & Jimmy A**; **The Sparks**; **REZ** (unplugged); **Crashdog**; **Sixpence None The Richer**; **Adam Again**; **Geoff Moore & The Distance**; **Cauzin' efekt**; **Phil Keaggy & Band**; **Charlie Peacock & Band**; **Poor Old Lu**; a hardcore stage; a performance of the new *At The Foot Of The Cross* album; and a jazz improv session (featuring **Stu Heiss** and others).

Here's a few upcoming album releases to watch out for: **Hoi Polloi** (in April); **Plank Eye** (in March); **Focused** (in March); **Strong Arm's Atone-ment** (in April); **Don't Know** (in April); **Deitophobia's Fear of the Digital Remyx** (March); **Fell Venus's @** (March); **Poor Old Lu's Sit And Stare** video (in April); **Tourniquet's Carry The Wounded** (in April); **Hymn Jim's Gospel Gems** (February); a compilation called *A Decade of Deliverance* by you-know-who (March); and **The 77's** boxset (March).

Congratulations to **Walter Harnish** of **Cry Mercy**, who announced his recent engagement to his soon-to-be-bridal **Mia**. Look for **Cry Mercy's** album later this year.

Speaking of engagements, ditto congrats go out to **Ted Kirkpatrick**, who will be marrying his fiance, **Lizett**, on August 19th of this year. Be sure and check out his love song for **Lizett** on the band's new EP.

Dale Thompson of **Bride** -- between rehearsals for the band's next album -- is writing a book on the history of **Bride**.



Guardian

(captured here on the set in Tulsa) has filmed a video for the song "The Way Home Back."

The following news was submitted to us by WZRK's Corey Jenness: All-star wide receiver **Sterling Sharpe** of the Green Bay Packers, was seen in a television interview before the December 24 game vs. Tampa Bay wearing a **Six Feet Deep** ball cap! Apparently, a member of the Pack purchased the item at the Lighthouse Bookstore in Green Bay. Other members of the team asked for one, and they eventually ordered 16 more caps. The "Minister of Defense," Reverend Reggie White, and Sharpe are confirmed to be owners of one. They are both Christians. Be praying for Sterling, as he is injured and will have to have an operation on his neck which may end his football career.

Betrayal has issued the following statement: "We in **Betrayal** would like to thank the

readers of **Heaven's Metal** for all of the prayers and letters of support that we have received concerning our lawsuit. We are pleased to announce that your prayers did not go unheard. Last month we were spared the pain of having to go to trial, as the matter was finally settled out of court! Thank you so much for your prayers. It definitely made a difference. We are also announcing a "last call" on ordering **Betrayal** merchandise. We will be closing shop at the end of March, so hurry! We still have all t-shirt designs available. You may write us at: 5632 Van Nuys Blvd, Suite 135, Van Nuys CA 91401. Thanks again for all the love, support, and memories. We will miss you all very much. Stay unfallen!"

Jesus Freaks are scheduled to release an album in the fourth quarter of this year. Early hype says it's heavy alternative with influences like **Pantera**, **Alice in Chains**, and

Metallica.

As you may have read in the **Mortification** ads, Steve Rowe's Rowe Productions are offering product from several unsigned bands under one address. Steve has also penned a novel called *Minstrels*. He has faxed us the following message: "Due to **Michael** (Carlisle)'s family commitments and **Phil** (Gibson)'s university commitments, both will not be continuing with the **Mortification** ministry. These more important priorities made it impossible for Mick and Phil to fulfill future touring commitments, which will now be fulfilled by new members **Jason Campbell** and **Bill Rice** from Canada. Please be assured that **Mortification** will continue as strong as ever with Jason & Bill featuring on the new album, *Primitive Rhythm Machine*, due for release in June.

"Please continue to pray for us, as the threats from satanists gets stronger. I have decided that it's not wise to play in clubs in Australia for a while due to being spat upon, had full beer cans thrown at us, and even a used tampon. The hatred is extreme. It's really sad, because we used to be so well accepted. It seems that, as the church in general (myself included) is going through a time of Holy Spirit renewal, the satanic metal scene just gets worse and worse - more extreme, hostile, and vicious. I even witnessed **Phil Anselmo** from **Pantera** tell 5,000 kids at a concert to worship Satan, and they all cheered -- and **Pantera** aren't even an extreme black metal band!

"Be in prayer for us, as God guides our future. We seem to be doing more and more church sponsored concerts rather than clubs, and they have been real successful. Lots of kids have been saved through just reading the lyrics of our CD's at home as well. I am receiving threats also for being involved with Chris-

Gary's Secret Weapon "Revealed"

Tourniquet's chart
topping release
"Vanishing Lessons"
demands a lot from
Gary Lenaire's
guitar playing
and Gary
demands a lot
from his guitar
of choice
— Abernathy.

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tian projects like **Horde** and **Vomoth**. I am not musically part of these projects, but it seems that the members have to keep their identities anonymous to keep from harm of satanic threats. Nuclear Blast have had the guts to release Horde, so please pray for Marcus Staiger and the Nuclear Blast staff and myself, as we are recognized as the direct link to the band." Steve's label, Rowe Productions, hooked up Horde with its Nuclear Blast distribution. *Blood World* will be released on Nuclear Blast with a different cover. The Horde album will release in April.

Although announced before, Reunion Records has now made official the formation of Rode Dog Records (before it had basically been a logo/name to release **The Prayer Chain** into the mainstream), which will house The Prayer Chain, **The Throes**, and a few other acts to follow. They will maintain a light release schedule of 3 to 4 projects a year, in order to give more focus to supporting their roster with retail, radio, and touring promotions. The Prayer Chain have just signed a booking deal with DLB Management. The band will tour hot on the heels of their new album, titled *Mercury*, this Spring. The band plans on playing over 60 shows from April to August. Tentatively billed as the opener is **Starflyer 59** with labelmate **Luxury** possibly playing some of the Southeast dates. Booking inquiries can be directed to (714) 863-9632.

Possession have signed with Chicago label Metal Merchant Records. A full-length album should be released in the next two months.

MTV has refused to play **Michael Sweet's** "Ain't No Safe Way" video, citing that "the video quality wasn't up to our standards." Those in the Sweet camp think there were other reasons: "Looks like abstinence is too 'hot' for MTV," says publicist Enid Lewin. The video opens with a teenage couple debating the finer points of "to do or not to do" in the front seat of their car parked at the drive-in.



The quality of the video shouldn't really be called into question, considering the talent that went into filming the concept clip. One of the largest lighting companies in the world was involved, whose tour credentials include James Taylor, Sting, and The Eagles, as well as movie and TV events such as the Super Bowl and the *NBA All-Star Jam Session*. John Featherstone was hired as the lighting director because of his work with secular artists like Van Halen, INXS, Janet Jackson, Duran Duran, and Bryan Adams. This video controversy has received national media attention from newspapers such as *USA Today*, the Associated Press, *New York Post*, and the *Boston Globe*, as well as nationally syndicated TV shows *Premier Story* and *Extra*.

Members of **Imagine This** were recently featured on Z Music Television's *Brimstone Chronicles*, America's only national Christian rock and metal music series. The series telecasts Saturdays at 12 midnight (EST). Since its launch in March 1993, Z Music Television has become one of the fastest growing music television networks, programming Christian music videos 24 hours a day representing all styles of Christian music. Z Music Television is managed by Gaylord Entertainment Company, parent company of CMT

(Country Music Television), CMT Europe, CMT Asia, and TNN (The Nashville Network).

Pictured from left to right are: Trey Hebert, Daryl Youngblood, *Brimstone Chronicles*' host Bryan Blumer, Essential Records Director Robert Beesen, Rick Weinland, Tambri Hunt, and Ahmed Montgomery. Imagine This has shot a video for the song "God" from their debut album.

The winner in the Z-music "Brimstone Chronicles/Heaven's Metal -- Why Brimstone Chronicles Is Important To Me" Essay Contest is Lori Fujimoto of Gardena, California. She won a copy of the Heaven's Metal Collection boxset and a copy of Cool Tunes. Her winning essay follows:

Why Brimstone Chronicles Is So Important To Me and Should Be Required Viewing In Public Schools (Just kidding).

Once I watched a movie about a man whose wife and whose long-time business partner were having an affair, and by gunpoint they took the man and dropped him in the middle of Nowhere Desert to die of exposure.

He crawls to a sandy gap area, and he almost resigns to die of thirst, yet something saved him -- he said in his mind,

"In springtime, where did all the desert waters flow? To the lowest point!!!" He got to the lowest point of the sandy area and he dug, and dug -- he sprung water, and lived to put his wife and business partner in jail!

What does "Brimstone" have to do with a survivor story??? "Brimstone" is my "desert water." It takes a lot to dig through my "desert" experiences, and gives my problems a temporary cooling and life. I've finally released my hate. I've deviated. I "pray for rain" (and Bryan Blumer and Z-music among others) and keep "Livin' for my Lord."

Thank you for what you are doing -- and for listening to my odd strains of logic. To all those who are under a heavy burden, He gave us a spirit, love, power, and sound mind.

Thank you "Brimstone," and "Heaven's Metal" for turning a desert situation into a "well of life" experience for a dying and thirsty "secular" world. And, yes, if Christians are pushy and negative, it's because we are a "peculiar people." Yet, thirsty people gravitate to success, and I think white metal is better than secular.

Be looking for the HM commercial on Z Music soon.

METAL TRACKS
Continued on page 47

CAMELOT

MUSIC

Everdown
Sicken
Tooth & Nail

Curious Fools
Curious Fools
Via

Fell Venus
Fell Venus
Via

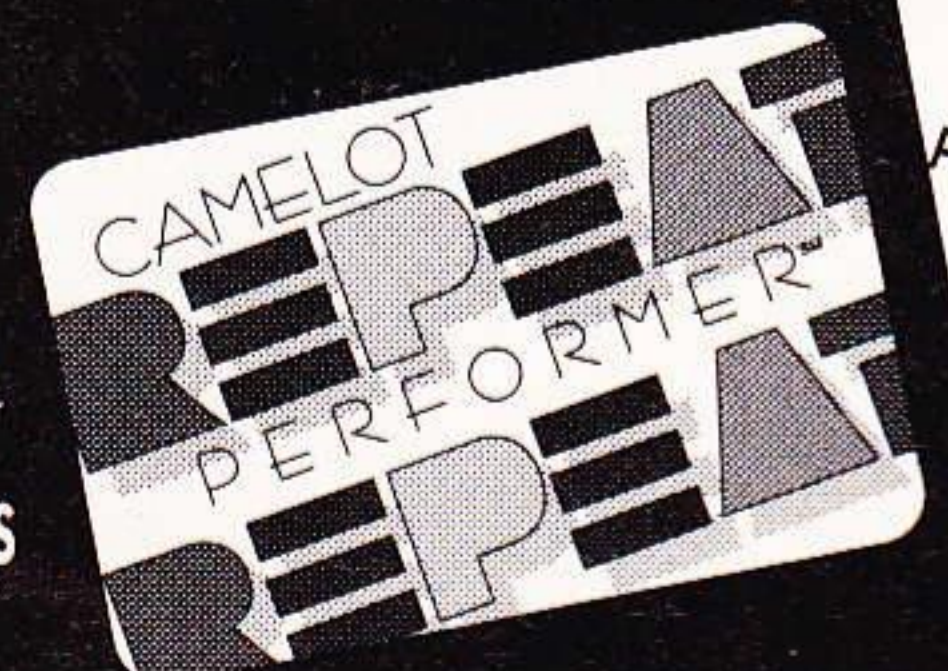
The Blamed
Frail
Tooth & Nail

Luxury
Amazing and Thank You
Tooth & Nail

Sometime Sunday
Stone
Tooth & Nail

65dBA
Shout
Integrity

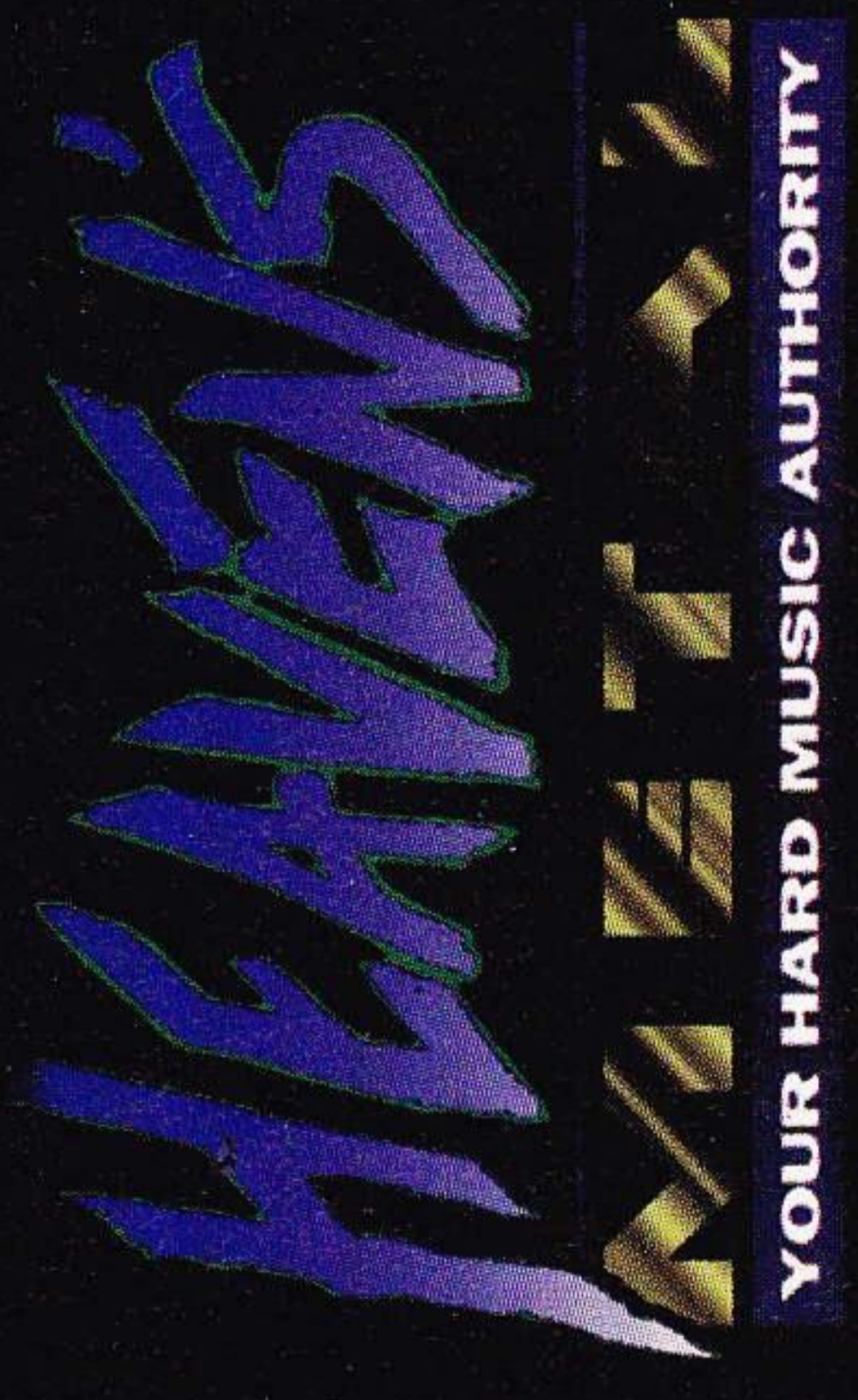
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King's X has been holed up in the rehearsal studio, writing new songs for its next album. Bassist **Doug Pinnick** reports that the songs are great, and that they're using their demos to shop for a producer. Hopefully, a new album will be out before year's end.

Nouveaux's debut album, *Beginnings*, is now available in Walmart in the rock section next to groups like Nirvana, instead of being stuck in the contemporary Christian section.

New Benson act **Three Crosses** are receiving production help from **Barry Beckett**, who has worked with other Southern rock artists, like Lynyrd Skynyrd and Hank Williams Jr. Look for the album from these New York-based Southern rockers to be released in May.

Tamplin states that his new material, due out later this month, sounds something akin to a "hard rock Stevie Winwood, but even that doesn't describe it," he continues. "I'm giving more attention to lyrics and melody, and using more percussive, natural instruments."

The old Pure Metal act **Force 3** have reformed with "the best line-up ever," says founder **Charlie Wilson**. British magazine *Cross Rhythms* describes the new sound as, "Petra meets the 77's."

Immediately following the Thanksgiving holiday, **The Kry** boarded a plane for France. The band went over to plant a new church. The band will be performing their music entirely in French. Taking to the streets of Nice, France, The Kry is doing small acoustic concerts to help build the church led by Pastor Pierre Petrigani. They have also been invited to schools and universities for public performances. People are attracted by the music and hear the Gospel spoken, some for the very first time. Men, women, and children that come forward at the invitation are ministered to by the new church members and the pastor. As France is not very friendly to Western missionaries, this is a wonderful opportunity to help

the local church become established. Reports back from Nice indicate that God is doing miraculous things in this city.

Speaking of France, Rugged Records prez **Michael Betts** headed over as we go to press to discuss several European distribution deals for Christian hard music. The popularity of Barren Cross in Europe is reportedly still very high. Rugged's distribution in the US via Diadem has just switched hands to the Music Entertainment Group, which also recently purchased Benson Music Group.

Flying Tart Records is working on releasing a **Stryper** tribute album. Label prez Alex Parker, who masterminded the *Steve Taylor Tribute Album - I Predict A Clone*, is having several bands record Stryper covers. Some of the confirmed acts are: **Dig Hay Zoose**; a duet with **Living Sacrifice** and **Klank**; a duet with **Argyle Park** and **Jeff Bellew**; and **Sometime Sunday**. Lord willing, look for coverage of this album in our "Stryper Tribute" issue this May/June (HM #53).

New signings to Flying Tart include: **Fluffy**, **Cricket**, and **Joe Christmas**.

Fleming & John's debut, entitled *Delusions of Grandeur*, is due out right away.

A new band, called **My Brother's Mother**, is worth keeping an eye on. **Jamie Eickler**, who used to handle background vocals for **The Violet Burning**, is the lead vocalist. Production and co-writing duties were done by the PrayerChain's **Andrew Prickett**.

Dakoda Motor Co.'s **Peter King**, who has been looking real loose and funny on MTV's *Sand Blast* TV Gameshow, has been hired to co-host a new show called *Mt. MTV*. Co-hosting with him will be popular vee-jays **Daisy Fuentes** and **Kennedy**. In late April, Peter will go back to Orlando, Florida to tape additional episodes of *Sand Blast*.

A Japanese label has released a compilation album over there by **Leviticus**, called (strangely enough) *The Best of Leviticus*. The 16 tracks are as



Jeff Weiss, the winner in the Abernathy Guitar Giveaway.

follows: "The Winner;" "Over The Hills;" "Lovin' My Woman;" "The Suffering Servant;" "I Got Power;" "Look Around;" "Oh Lord;" "Stand Up;" "Flames of Fire;" "All Is Calm;" "Born Again;" "I Love You;" "A New Day;" "Deborah & Barak;" "On The Rock;" and "Psalm 23."

REZ's 13th album, *Lament*, is being recorded now with the help of producer **Ty Tabor**. It is a concept album, which captures the journey through life of a disillusioned young man and woman. A monster REZ/**Whitecross** tour is being booked for this Fall.

The mega blues jam from last year's Cornerstone Festival, which featured **Glenn Kaiser**, **Larry Howard**, and **Darrell Mansfield**, was recorded and will be released as a one-hour live album, entitled *Into The Night* (a literal title, as the jam went on until about 4 am!).

Grrr labelmates **Crashdog** are also in the studio working on a new album. This one is slated for a June release and will feature guest appearances from **The Clergy** and **Six Feet Deep**.

Rob Rock of

Impelliteri reports that their new album, *Answer The Master*, is doing great in Japan. "It's up to 50,000 copies so far," says Rob. The band will be touring there in late February. "The Lord has been wonderful to me," continues Rob, "and has blessed me with an awesome new wife -- Sue. Also, (guitarist) **Chris Impelliteri** accepted Jesus! On our last promo tour in October, every mag there asked about the message and the Lord was glorified. It was really special! Hopefully, we'll get distribution in the States, but the Lord's will be done."

After returning from a 3-week U.S. tour last Fall, **Decision D** has gone into the studio to record its third CD -- *The Last Prostitute*. Look for it on Bark Horse Records in April.

Norwegian death metal group **GROMS** has released its debut album -- *Ascension*. This is the first Christian metal release in Norway released on a mainstream label -- Arctic Serenades. GROMS, who hails from Kristiansand, have played together since '92 and have played 50-60 concerts in Norway, including twice at Scandinavia's biggest Christian music festival -

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- Skjargardsgospel. In July '93, they toured Poland. Expect a sound in the vain of Morbid Angel, Cannibal Corpse, and Death.

Scott Albert and **Daren Diolosa** of **Circle of Dust** are now endorsed by Abernathy Guitars. So, why did Circle re-release its debut album again? Scott made the decision to re-record (not just remix) much of his original material to update the production. Marked as a perfectionist and now being fully equipped with his own studio, Scott decided to go for it. A tour is currently in the works! So far, the mainstream press has penned Circle as sounding like a cross between Sepultura, KMFDM, Skinny Puppy, NIN, Erasure, Skrew, Ministry, and Slayer.

Australia's monks, **Ignite**, (the heavy ones in heavy metal) have completed their debut EP, which is releasing on Rowe Productions. A German label called Benton are placing the tune "Nightmares" on a compilation that will be released in Europe.

A new product has hit the shelves in the form of a small book the size of a compact disc, which companies are displaying in the CD racks. Chariot Books have released two that cover Christian music. Well written by True Tunes editor John Thompson, Sound Alternatives briefly describes the history and style of bands like The 77's and The Prayer Chain, while Sound Expressions covers bands like Newsboys, DC Talk, and PFR. The best part of these books is they act as a great introduction to Christian music to those who've never heard of it, to the point of explaining how to go about finding Christian music in stores, on radio, and in concert in their area.

Poor Old Lu is re-releasing its '92 demo, called *Star-Studded-Super-Step*. Pressed on CD, it should have several rare, demo, and bonus tracks on it.

This Spring and Summer will find **Michelle Deneen** and her band, **The Warriors**, on tour and playing concerts, teen centers, Christian clubs, and the

Michigan Mosh Fest.

A new music ministry, called "Mission X," is launching this Spring in Houston, Texas. Their goal is to present Christ through concert, drama, worship, video, and photo imagery. For info, write: c/o HFBC, 7401 Katy Freeway, Houston, TX 77024.

In related news, a new group called "The Sentinels" have formed to help unify the body of Christ. For more info, write: 30 San Martin Dr, Gansevoort, NY 12831.

A limited amount of copies of the **King James** debut video, "Hard Road To Go," (featuring **Tim Gaines & Robert Sweet**) are available through mail order. To purchase one, send \$10 (plus \$2 postage) to: King James Fan Club, PO Box 1982, Tempe, AZ 85280-1982.

The ForeFront Communications Group and Ardent Christian Music have reached an agreement to promote and distribute Ardent Christian Music artists, and to bring Ardent's AudioVision CD technology to the CBA (Christian Bookseller's Association) marketplace. The AudioVision CD features a full album playable on the standard CD player, and an interactive audio-visual section playable on a personal computer. Cool eh? The first project to be released through this new agreement is new artist **Big Tent Revival**. Hailing from Memphis, the band is said to be a melding of the sounds the city is famous for with commercial alternative appeal. Look for possible future projects of a similar nature soon from Tooth & Nail Records, and possibly Heaven's Metal, too.

Truth Clothing, who make the raging new HM t-shirts, have formed a new group with Star Song, called the "Star Song Apparel Group."

"Lollapomona" is the name of a 6-band show in Pomona, California on March 4th.

Frank's Enemy has been busy lately. They've begun filming a video for their song, "Link Line," which is the band's first single from its debut album. Some of the interesting scenes

filmed include **Julio Rey** mugging for the camera in his bathroom, lit only by a flashlight suspended from the ceiling; and drummer **Alex A's** brother, **Gabriel A**, acting out a suicide. The band recorded a new song, "Stephen Hawking Walked Away," for bassist **Marc Golob's** sound engineering class at a local Junior College. The band hopes to record a fast hardcore tune called "Inevitable" this semester to release a 7" single. Julio and Marc played an "unplugged" version of "You Are God" at Julio's church. Although fun, both agreed they prefer to play "plugged." The band is opening for Mortification and Jesus Freaks in Florida. The band plans on heading out of the state for a tour this summer. For info on this, or to receive the band's next newsletter, write: PO Box 523899, Miami, FL 33152-3899.

Soulkeeper has been selected to appear on a compilation CD put out by Cranial Captivity Records. The band's cut will be the song, "Receive It." Also appearing will be P.O.D., Final Warning, Antic, and others. Cranial Captivity is a division of Visions of Gray magazine, as is a new studio and music venue called The Strand. They just began construction on a new 24-track digital studio, which will be available for live and studio recordings. Call (404) 421-1433 for info.

Congrats to Rolltop Recording artist **Vivien Schmuki** and husband **Kevin** on the recent birth of their second child, **Leo Alexander**. In other Rolltop family news, **Deven Berryhill** of **D.B.B.** showed up at a sold out **Surfaris** concert and played guitar with his dad and mom -- **Bob and Jean Berryhill**. The concert was sponsored by the Horizon Surf Fellowship and Gordon & Smith Surfboards.

Brenda Barnett, formerly of **Seventh Sign**, **Robert Carlton**, formerly of **Sevenfold**, and **Mike Barnett**, formerly of **Crumbacher**, have established a new band called **White Stone** (Revelation 2:17). "This is not simply a new band," states Robert, "it is a completely new experience for all of us! I live in

Long Island, New York; and Brenda and Mike live in Southern California. I answered a 'Guitarist Wanted' ad that Brenda had placed. As crazy as it might sound, we felt that God was leading us to minister together through music. While writing songs through the mail, Brenda and I composed over 17 songs in just three months." The band's debut album is recorded and should be out soon.

Chris Brown and **Jeff Grady** of **Eternity** have both received endorsements from Abernathy Guitars. The band has just finished recording its new tape -- *Kiss That Kills*. The only thing missing are the vocal tracks, as the band is still searching for a singer. Interested parties may call (314) 359-2336.

Embodiment have a tape out, called *Corrosion of the Flesh*. For info, write: PO Box 99601-306, Arlington, TX 76096-9601.

Iron Faith has a new permanent address: 555 S. Glenwood Ave, Independence MO 64053.

The band **Elias** (reviewed in HM #50) has a new address: PO Box 182, 355 Henderson Hwy, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R2L-1M0. The cost of their new tape is \$8.

Be sure to check out the Heaven's Metal tent at this year's Cornerstone. We're planning some really cool stuff, like acoustic sets, seminars with our columnists (Jeff Scheetz, Kemper Crabb, Wendi Kaiser, Pastor Bob), a museum of sorts with odd artifacts from the history of Christian metal, and 1,000 copies of HM Issue #1 to commemorate and celebrate our 10th Year Anniversary.

Looking ahead to this year's "Gospel Music Week," commonly referred to as "GMA Week," we see a showcase by Rugged Records on Tuesday night, which means people will get a chance to see Red Sea in action. Don't be surprised if there are some surprise guests on stage that night . . . and don't be surprised if there's an "industry vs. artists" touch football game the day of the Doves.

HM

TAMPLIN

It was about 3 a.m. before the *Testify* tour rolled through the gates of the Air Force Academy on September 25th. Never in the history of the Cadet Chaplain's office had there ever been such a highly anticipated concert.

Sunday began with Ken Tamplin making a guest appearance before about 400 worshippers at the Cadet Chapel. Ken opened the service with "Amazing Grace" and ended with "How Great Thou Art." One of the Spring's Christian radio stations, KGFT, opened their air waves for us for an hour that afternoon. We had concert tickets to give out to callers. Ken brought a handful of T-shirts, CD's, and 8x10's as well as an acoustic guitar. He played three songs, including "Save Me," a new song which may be on his next album. Ken did his best Neil Diamond impression for listeners, saying, "Hey, look! It's Neil Diamond!" He did it pretty well. You know, now that I think about it, perhaps they are one and the same... Following the station event was an in-store at Media Play. Ken met with some of the store patrons and a group of cadets who were there. The in-store monitors echoed "Slave Trade" as the video played.

The concert kicked off with David Hill and The New City Band. Still looking for the right record deal, this southern rock group from Florida should have no problem. Their set was tight and clean. A featured song, "Warrior," will probably become their trademark.

Next on deck was Jeff Scheetz and Band. As the curtain opened, the audience stood to greet them. Jeff and the guys ripped through "Woodpecker Stomp" and other favorites. A few concert goers got caught up in the spirit of Jeff's guitar shredding and needed security to settle them down. A new song, "Bicycle," was premiered as well. Don't miss Jeff and the band if they come to your town -- either way, be sure to pick up their video. They were superb.

Greg Volz was next before Tamplin. Greg sang Petra favorites and songs from his solo albums. Mixing songs with testimony, he truly provided the audience with variety and the vocal power he is known for. Look for Greg's new band, Xray, to have a debut album out in '95.

About this time I noticed two ladies in their 70's sitting near the back of the auditorium. I took the opportunity to greet them and asked them how they liked the show. They said they were enjoying themselves, but came to "see the man who sang at the Cadet Chapel."

The evening climaxed with Tamplin, who put on a flawless 60-minute set, opening with "Get Out Of My Sun," then straight into "Livin' For My Lord." Ken's high energy show couldn't help but bring and keep the crowd on its feet. "Who here wants to testify?" he asked, and there was a roaring response leading into his most recent #1 Gospel rock hit of the same title. Using his wireless guitar and headset, he was able to leave the stage to be in the audience where he sang "Don't Let The Sky Fall On Me," while exchanging hugs and handshakes. He played "Save Me"

Ken live (Photo: Tsgt. Dennis Rogers)



again that evening, and received a positive response from the fans. Inviting everyone to help him sing "When The Clock Runs Down," he threw T-shirts, cassettes and autographed photos into the audience. Ken's new guitar player, Tamas Szeveres, from Budapest, Hungary, is considered that country's best. Any doubts of his national title dissolved with his guitar solo. On keyboards was Grammy Award Nominee Casey Young. What else can I say? Ken's band was ready and rehearsed, no question about it.

Afterward, Ken was presented with a plaque of appreciation from the Chaplain's Office. Time was taken to sign autographs and have pictures taken with those who attended. This tour was a tough one on all the bands. Lovewar dropped out after a few dates, management problems forced venue cancellations, and bus trouble and the flu topped things off. Despite all, the guys were gracious with everyone they met and were upbeat. The show lived up to its billing. Veteran and fledgling groups alike should check out Tamplin live to see how it's done.

--Dan J. Howell

Top inset:
Ken w/cadets (Photo: Roxie Murphy)

Bottom: Jeff Scheetz Band
(Photo: Tsgt. Dennis Rogers)





Precious Death & Tourniquet

Saturday, September 24th saw an incredible show here in Sacramento, with a double headline bill featuring Precious Death and Tourniquet.

Precious Death was the first up at bat. They got the crowd going frantic! We ran out of room on the stage, and couldn't fit two drum kits (Mr. Kirkpatrick's took up most of the stage). As we were contemplating where to put Roger's drums, he said, "I know. How about on top of the prayer room -- on the roof?" We checked out the framing and up went the drums - about 15 feet from the floor! It was totally awesome! A definite first for the Calvary Refuge! I was afraid that our prayer room might need prayer after the show, but it worked out great. Precious Death, with their neo-funk-thrash was a big hit with the crowd. They have got to be one of the hottest, most innovative groups out there live!

Tourniquet left no survivors, as they totally assaulted the crowd with their techno-classical-thrash. I was very excited to see and hear Luke

Easter, as this was my first opportunity to see the band with their new lineup. This kid can scream, jump, and basically go ballistic with the best of them. His drawls and overtones were very reminiscent of early Metallica.

Gary Lenaire and Victor Macias were incredible (as usual). Victor's bass leads were precise, and Gary's guitar work was sizzling as it mesmerized the audience. New guitarist Aaron Guerra (formerly known as Aaron Trotter) enticed the crowd with some creative licks, and Ted "The Killer" Kirkpatrick filled the percussion void in our hearts that night. He is absolutely insane behind that drum kit! He played the drum solo from "K517" note for note. The guy is amazing. I would put Ted up against any secular drummer on planet Earth!

Tourniquet's set was complete with pyro-technics, courtesy the flame man and demolition expert -- Drew Fisher. You haven't lived until you've seen Tourniquet live. It is my prayer that these boys will get the break that they need . . . and fill stadiums. They are as talented as anyone in music!

I gave an altar call, and close to two dozen young people responded! Praise God that He uses a vehicle like Christian metal to reach those who wouldn't normally go into a church!

--Pastor Fred. Z

Fourth Estate & Martha's Wake

After recently moving to Colorado, I've had the pleasure of experiencing two of Denver's finest Christian bands, and let me start off by saying that both Fourth Estate and Martha's Wake deserve much more than just mere words to describe their performances. You really have to see them for yourselves, because I doubt I can do as good a job of shocking you as they did to me on this night.

I knew something serious was about to happen when the deep roar of the synth shook the walls around me. The trembling vibrations terrified me and I began to wonder just what I had gotten myself into. Martha's Wake took charge of the stage with their opening song, "The War Within." Wow, a female vocalist! And she's got a killer voice, similar to Wigtop. Two other girls, one of whom is the bassist, back her up on vocals.

This band takes on a fascinating alternative Arabian style with full keyboard strings and sound effects. They tend to go back and forth from soft guitar building up to very heavy thrash with headbanging. What surprises me most about Martha's Wake and what really captured my attention was Lori Benzien, who boosted the band's diversity by playing flute, recorder, and trumpet! They surprisingly fit in very well with the melodic droning atmosphere. For an unsigned band, they've got it all - except recognition.

I really found it hard to imagine that the headlining band could actually be better than Martha's Wake. But I found that Fourth Estate was truly exceptional. This is a three-piece instrumental band with no vocalist. Believe me, they don't need one. Talk about being blown

away! I was on my knees.

There are absolutely no keyboards or samplers in this band, though I could have sworn I heard the sound of a full orchestra vibrating out from the guitar strings as they opened the set.

Dave Beegle has incredible talent in transferring his emotions to music. What good are lyrics when you already feel what the song is trying to express? He uses a wide range of sounds and melodies to create an emotion that everyone picks up. Listening to him play is like taking a ride through Dave Beegle's vast imagination.

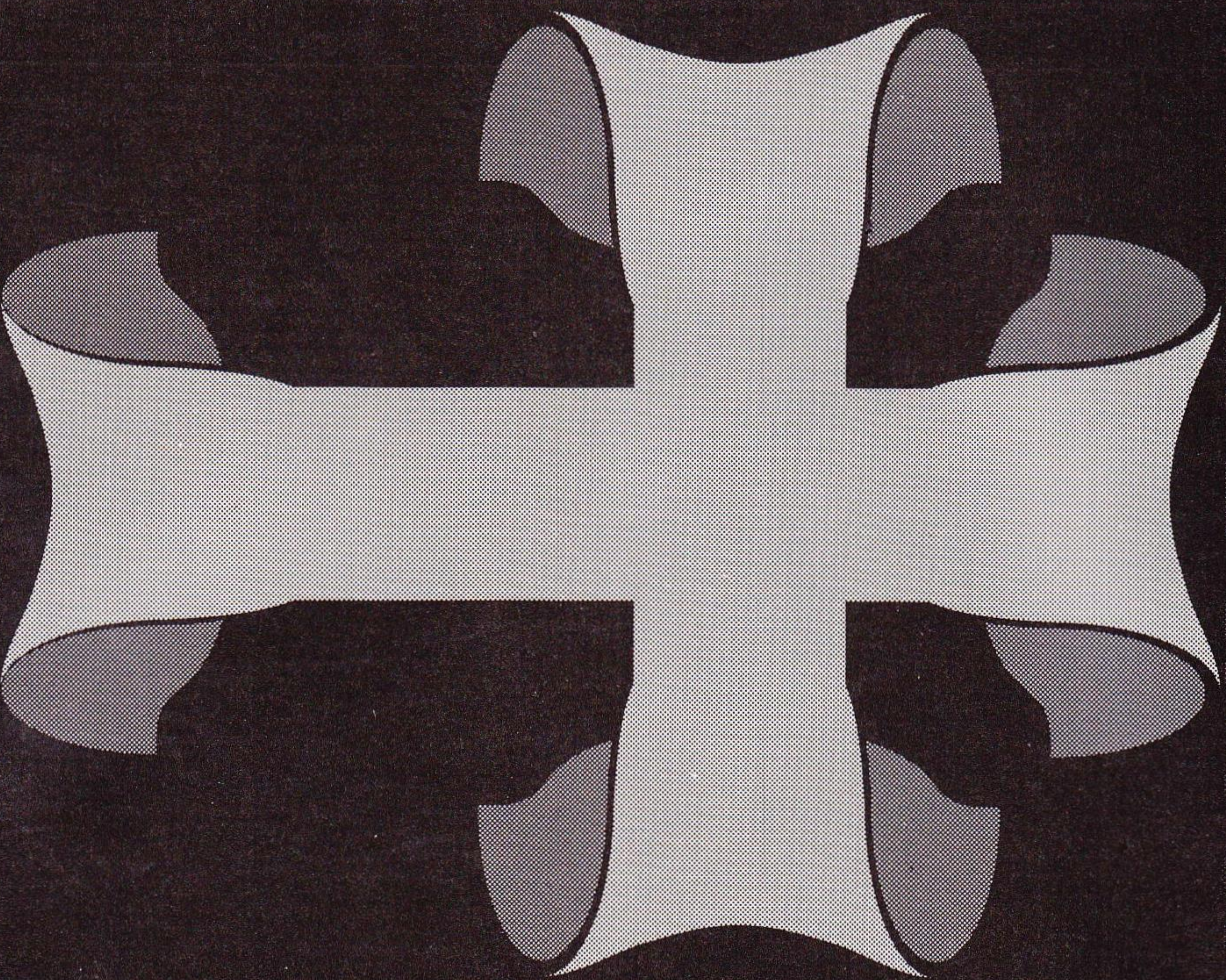
One of the most stunning attributes of Fourth Estate is their ability to play any style of music and make their guitars sound like other instruments. For instance, I thought I had seen it all, before they moved into "Highlander," an Irish-style bagpipe song. The bass was doing the low-pitched bagpipe humming while the lead guitar played the bagpipe melody. I don't think I can handle this anymore. I'm about to cry. Where are all the bagpipes and plaid skirts?

Just when I thought I was going to get a chance to rest with a nice mellow acoustic tune, I was wrong. Dave Beegle ripped through a 400 year old acoustic classical piece like I had never seen before. It reminded me of the days of Mike Lee's live acoustic work. The hand was faster than the eye. I felt like I was at a magic show rather than a concert with Dave's unbelievable speed picking.

Dave Beegle seems to have appreciation for all styles of music -- you name it, he plays it, and extremely well. His biggest influence, though, is obviously 70's rock, which he demonstrates by playing and singing the Jimi Hendrix classic "Manic Depression." I was on the verge of a musical nervous breakdown by the end of the night when they finally closed the show with "Moby Dick is Dazed and Confused," a compilation of Zeppelin riffs mixed together with their own. What a way to end a set!

--Bill Hicks HM

David Benson



David Benson's debut release is in the musical tradition of Black Sabbath and Ozzy Osbourne, BUT FULL ON FOR JESUS CHRIST!

"Can anyone say, 'Ozzy Osbourne'? I could have sworn that somehow Ozzy Osbourne got on this tape by accident."

"The music is first class metal and the production is first class as well."

-Jeff Lot, HEAVEN'S METAL MAGAZINE

"David Benson has everything it takes to make a significant impact in the music scene. He has an ear for power metal hooks, challenge the status quo of both nation and religious pretenders, and you just can't get away from that voice--an uncanny to some guy with the initials O. O. who barks at the moon. Look for this album to skyrocket into the top rotations of radio stations and stereo systems around the world."

-Marc Carpenter, THE CUTTING EDGE

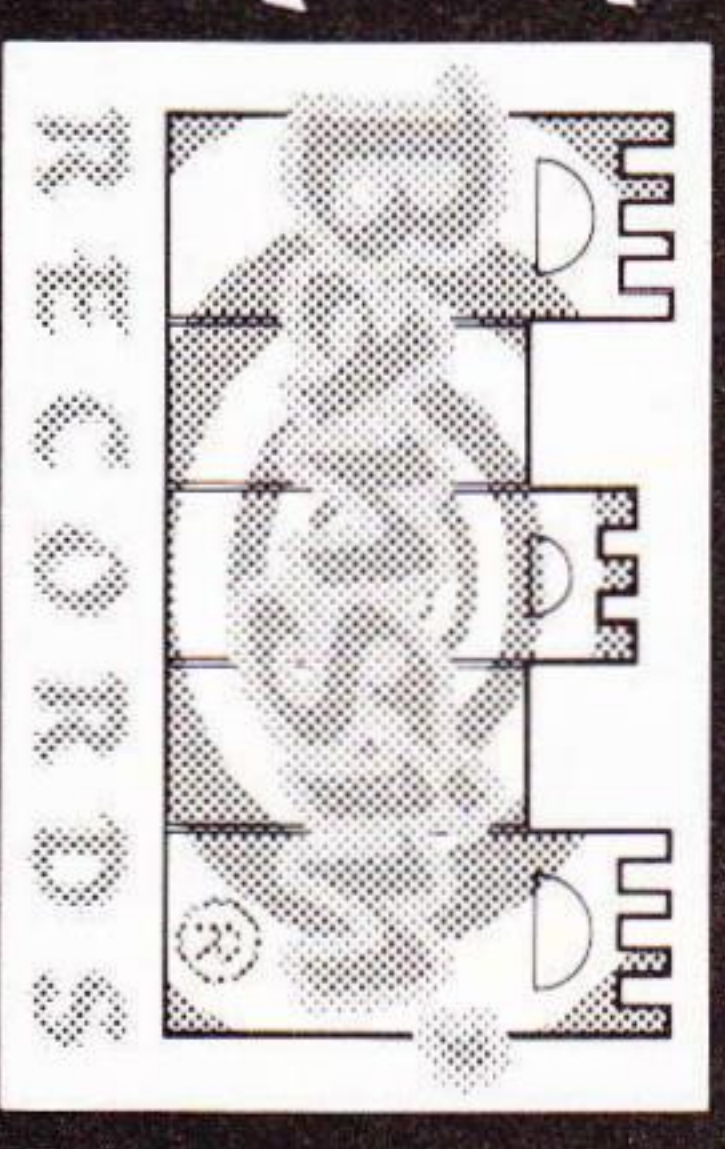
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Artist Book Reviews

By Michael Bloodgood

Curling up with the books this issue is Seattle musician Michael Bloodgood, the founder of one of Christian metal's most potent and professional outfits, and currently the bassist for the Oh-Zone Players. We can bet that much coffee and thought went into the following reviews, so check out what this veteran rocker thinks about some of the latest books available.

The God of Stones & Spiders (Letters to a Church in Exile) **Charles Colson**

Crossway Books

No, this isn't a book about the gods of a couple rock bands. However, it is a collection of essays written by Colson for numerous publications, including Christianity Today and Jubilee. The premise for Colson's book is "that the church in the West today -- in so many ways captive to the forces of a hostile culture -- would draw strength and renewed conviction for the battle."

As the book progresses, Colson shares some of his observations of what is happening in the world, particularly the US, and how it differs from the biblical point of view. Colson doesn't necessarily give us all the answers, but his essays are certainly thought-provoking. His topics are many and varied -- from the hypocrisy of environmental activists and the women's movement to the absurdity of relativism so dogmatically entrenched in most of our society today.

From start to finish, I found Stones & Spiders to be well worth the time and money. It will be a real eye-opener to those who haven't seen what's happening in our country and a real encouragement to those who have. The answer to our country's dilemma -- to the world's dilemma -- is clear; His name is Jesus Christ. Colson is wanting to light that fire under the church and remind her of her duty to bring the Gospel to everyone. To "have this attitude which was also in Christ . . . taking the form of a bondservant..." (Philippians 2:5-7). To which I would add: "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the Lord Almighty" (Zechariah 7:1, NIV).

Life Application Bible For Students The Living Bible

Tyndale

Wow, what a great tool! I highly recommend this Bible for new believers, young adults, and anyone looking for a break

from the Thee's and Thou's of their Bibles. Tyndale has put together a very user-friendly Bible that everyone can enjoy. They have added such practical application tools like "Moral Dilemma Notes," which are real-life case studies on moral issues bringing the reader the relevant Scriptures on the issue to help them make a biblical response. There are also true stories sprinkled throughout, the "Here's What I Did" notes, of how other young people have personally applied God's Word to their individual situations. At the end of each book in the Bible there is a "Megathemes" section that presents discussion questions focusing on the book's main theme(s). The Life Application Bible For Students is seasoned with cool clip art, hip fonts, easy-to-read maps and more.

The Living Bible is still the easiest-reading Bible on the shelf today, and is a great paraphrase of God's Word for those young in the faith as well as a breath of fresh air for all us old duffers, too. Try it, you'll like it.

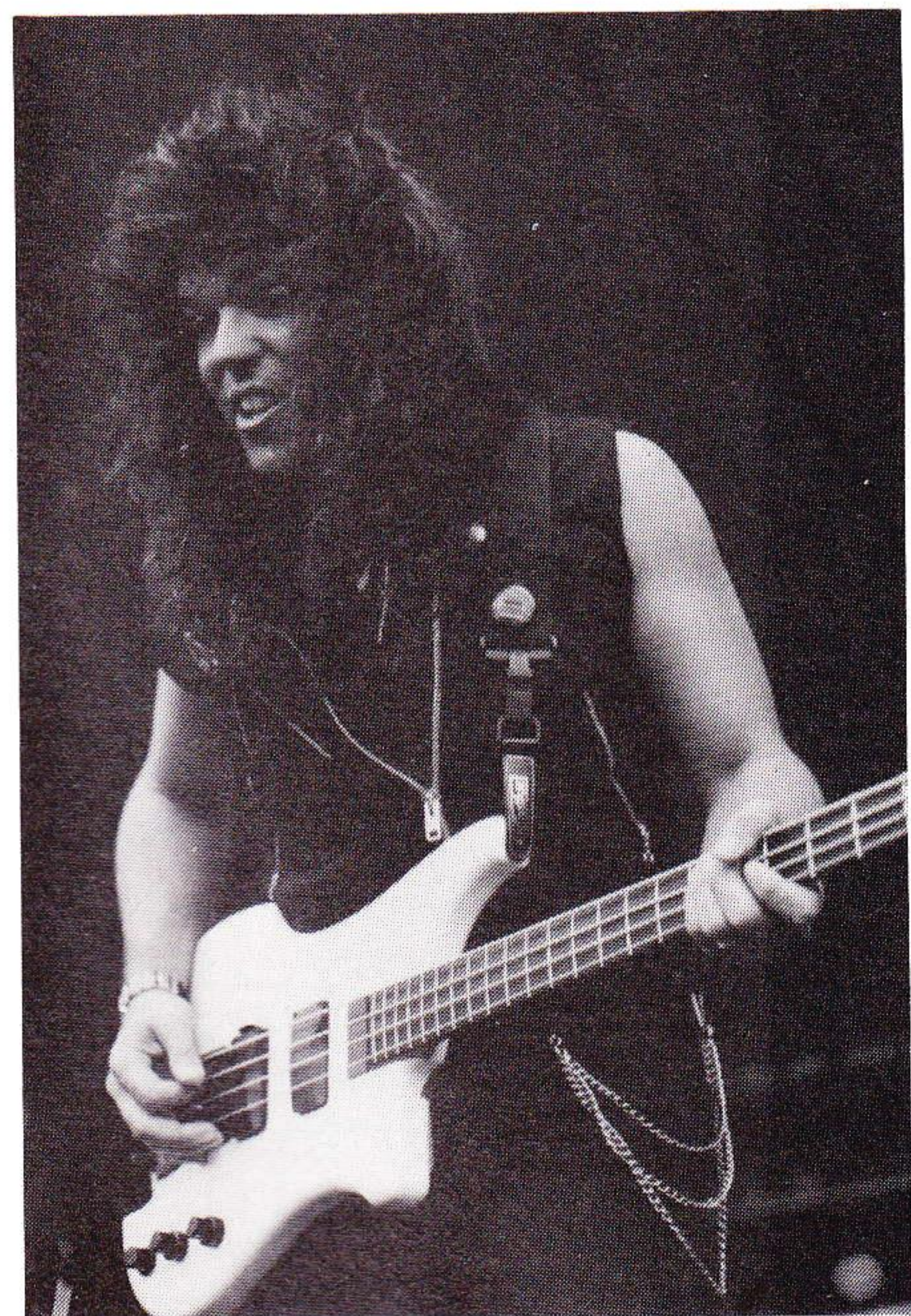
Who Speaks For God? **Charles Colson**

Crossway Books

This was the second book I picked up by Colson after reading Loving God. Like The God of Stones and Spiders, which followed it, Who Speaks For God? is a collection of columns Chuck wrote for Jubilee Magazine. First published in 1985, it is still relevant for readers some ten years later (Always a sign of a good writer).

Who Speaks For God? was one of the earlier books dealing with the subject of the decline of our culture, and the church's response, as we enter a post-Christian era. (Francis Shaeffer's Whatever Happened To The Human Race? was one of the first books dealing with this issue that I am aware of) It truly is amazing, when you take the time to look, to see just how far and how fast the United States has slipped over the past 50 years. What took other civilizations hundreds of years to do, has taken us only decades it would seem. The "liberalization" of America has only succeeded in liberating us from our Christian heritage and replacing it with the bondage of humanistic ideals whose very foundational beliefs are naive at best and blatantly anti-Christian at worst.

Who Speaks For God? delivers brief but challenging ideas to its readers. In answering his own question, Colson knows that no one speaks for God except insofar as



they speak based upon His inerrant Word.

The world has been in a constant vigil of trying to undermine the Lordship of Jesus for the last 2,000 years, and will continue to do so up until the end of Christ's millennial reign. Chuck exhorts us in our biblical illiteracy and calls on us to see how much the Christian worldview has been undermined both by a "fierce frontal assault," as well as more subtly. We are engaged in a battle for the values of our culture. Chuck calls moral confusion "Satan's favorite weapon," and there has been plenty of that to go around -- in case you haven't noticed.

Colson, like so many others, is calling us to repentance. Says Colson, "Jesus came not only to comfort the afflicted, but to afflict the comfortable. Any hope for revival must begin with genuine repentance, our willingness to give up what we have, and our desire to change . . . the Gospel is good news. But Jesus never said it was easy news."

Too many of us, I fear, have put too much hope in the outcome of last year's election. It is a beginning only. Politics foster the illusion that we can solve all of our problems through the system of government, and it gives us the illusion of security -- "the government said they'll deal with the problem, so I don't have to." Truly, we do need to wake up and smell the coffee and return to biblical Christianity. Then, and only then, will the church be a force for God's will.

When Nations Die (America on the Brink: Ten Warning Signs of a Culture in Crisis) **Jim Nelson Black** Tyndale

I love titles that tell you exactly what the book is about. This would be a great

Book Reviews cont'd:

companion book to go with The God of Stones & Spiders (Colson) and Global Peace and the Rise of the Antichrist (Hunt). Hey guys, are we listening? The bells are being rung by the watchmen. We are in some serious trouble here in the good ol' US of A. Book after book, broadcast after broadcast is sending a warning sign, a wake-up call to the church. Our time is running out. It could even be too late. You decide.

Black's book does what it says it's going to do. It lays out ten classic symptoms common to all great civilizations before their demise and eventual downfall. They include escalating lawlessness, loss of economic discipline, declining education, increasing materialism, decaying religious belief, devaluing of human life, and so on. Do these topics sound familiar? They should. Black draws the more-than-obvious parallels between these signs and what is happening in the United States today. This is sobering stuff, boys and girls. But, we can no longer afford to stick our heads in the ground and pretend it isn't happening. As the saying goes, "Those who refuse to learn from history are doomed to repeat it."

All throughout When Nations Die, Black rings the warning bells: "Christians have a duty to pray for the nations and their leaders . . . But, along with our prayers, we must also take up the challenge and become an active part of the solution to these problems."

God has called us, the believing church, to be the salt and the light of the world. That doesn't happen inside the church building, but outside -- in our daily lives at work, school, and at home. We all need to take a hard look at the practical side of our Christianity and ask the Lord what He would have us do. One way to start is to go out and get When Nations Die and allow yourself to be challenged and discover how you might "gain a vision for the renewal of our culture."

The Twilight Of Courage Bodie and Brock Theone

Thomas Nelson

The year is 1939. The Nazi German war machine is ready to launch its deadly assault on an unprepared Europe. History is about to be made. Millions are going to die, as the world is about to encounter the demonic fury of the most barbaric madman in modern history -- Adolph Hitler.

The writing team of Bodie and Brock Theone draw us into one of the darkest periods of this century -- World War II. Twilight focuses on the early days of the Second War -- from the fall of Poland to the

invasion of France by the Third Reich. But this is not a history textbook. It is a story about people. We see the thrill, suffering, and terror through the eyes of a multitude of different characters. Too often we can view history as a dull list of statistics and maps, forgetting the fact that history is about people, people just like you and me. Well-researched historical fiction, like Twilight, can help us see what was really happening during this time in Europe through the eyes of its believable characters.

The people we meet in Twilight are wide and varied. They include Josie Marloe, a widowed American journalist on assignment from the Associated Press; we meet Richard Lewinski, the eccentric mathematics genius who is trying to unravel the secret Nazi code. There is Madame Rose who, along with her sister, runs a large orphanage in Paris and we are drawn into their struggle to escape the blitzkrieg along with their children. There is also Horst Von Brockman, loyal German officer, who is confronted with his devotion to his native land and the atrocities he sees the Nazi SS troops committing against innocent civilians. Each of the interesting characters brings a different perspective and struggle into the story as it unfolds.

A major theme of The Twilight of Courage is the reality of anti-Semitism and how it affected all the characters in the story. The novel also lets us witness the personal courage and self-sacrifice so many undertook to defend freedom and country in the face of overwhelming odds. None of us can afford to forget or take for granted the high cost of the freedom we now enjoy; it came at a terrible price.

Cover to cover, Twilight is a well-written book, as it draws the reader into each of the unfolding stories, which overlap and entwine each other throughout the novel. Twilight was written for an older audience and does contain some mild sexual situations which could offend some readers.

The only major disappointment for me came at the very end of the novel. In fact, it is the ending which left me so ungratified . . . it just stopped. Not that every story has to have a surgically-clean ending, but I still think the book needed some kind of gratifying conclusion other than the one it offered, or rather did not offer. I am still hoping to discover that this was just part one of a three-part trilogy. Maybe the Theones will give me what I want next year in, say, The "Dawn" of Courage?

HM

TOUR DATES

These dates are booked well in advance, so please check with the numbers listed for confirmation of the concert. If the mood strikes you, send in your review of the show...it may get printed in Heaven's Metal!

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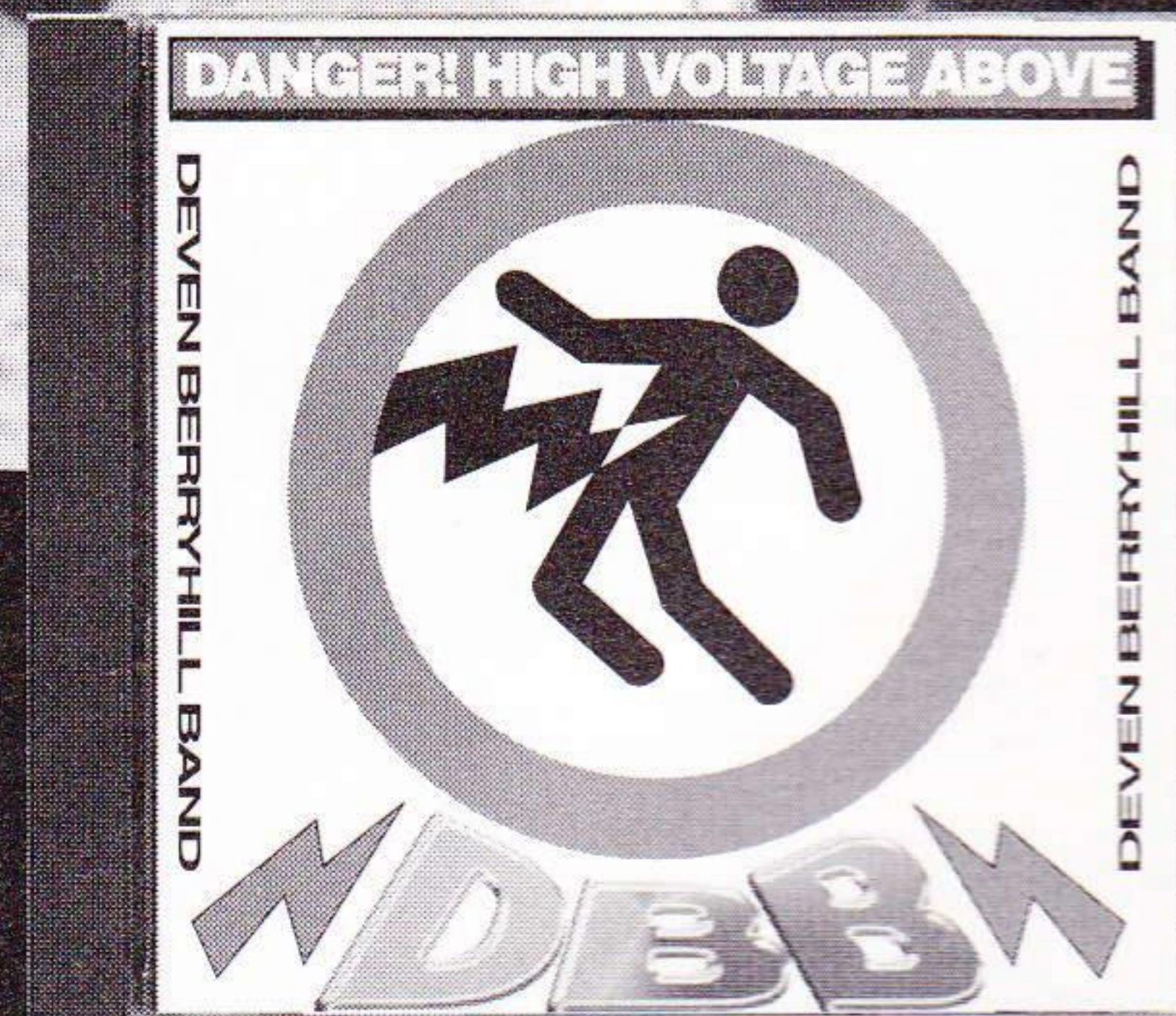
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ALBUM REVIEWS

TOURNIQUET

Carry The Wounded

Intense

The men of high metal musical standards are back. Besides giving us something to feast on until another full-length album, this 5-song EP shows a further development the band has undergone since adding Luke Easter to the line-up.

The title track is a great tune that starts off the album with the band shaking loose in a new textured sound that is full and brilliant. The added percussion and guitar strumming add the spice to this cool groove. Lyrically, this song drives home a great message about how we all, at one time or another, become wounded in our fight and need the help of those around us -- not condescending judgement.

There's a pretty ballad penned here by love-struck Ted for his fiancée, Lizett. Accompanied by piano, Luke's voice carries the song in a very pleasant melodic direction. While not having the vocals of Michael Sweet, this song captures the essence of a song like "Honestly." The remake of "My Promise" achieves a similar feel. It's a lot bigger sounding than the original. "Heads I Win, Tails You Lose" is another tune, like "Twilight," that finds the band exploring a more commercial side to their heaviness. While maybe disappointing for the early Tourniquet fan, it still sounds good.

The highlight here is the cover of the old Fleetwood Mac classic, "Oh Well." Again, we see a texturing that adds spice to the original. The acoustic guitars were a creative and unexpected touch. The pounding drums that build the opening crescendo are powerful. I think the lower register that Luke takes in delivering the song, as compared to the

striking original, is a little disappointing; but the all-out jam that Tourniquet adds makes up for it big time.

With this small step in between albums, I wonder what the next full-length Tourniquet will sound like?

--Doug Van Pelt

MAGDALEN

Dirt

Intense

Here's a record I've been curious about for a long time -- an acoustic EP by Magdalen. Hmm. They've got tremendous talent and are good songwriters. Once I put it on, I realized my expectations of a Guardian sound-alike were way off base. This stuff is much more clean. I mean, these guys utilize cello, violin, sitar, tablas, accordion, and a myriad of other instruments. What is achieved is a mixture of new age natural contemplative music with an acoustic folk rock direction. Who would've ever guessed this recipe for a cover of Black Sabbath's "War Pigs?"

Once you realize what kind of beast you're listening to here, you can appreciate it as a classy piece of contemplative music. The part of me that digs the atmospheric sounds of Jeff Johnson and Iona rejoices over these six songs.

Lyrically, these guys have penned four originals in addition to the fore-mentioned Sabbath cover and Marley classic -- "Redemption Song." One of the originals seems to be an ode to Kurt Cobain and those patterning after his reckless lifestyle -- "Shotgun Shack." The song "Streets of No Hope" is a vivid picture of a girl who needs to notice the dirt she's in, brush it off, and grasp God's redemption.

Overall, we've got an excellent esoteric album here by some rockers -- and not vice-versa.

--DV

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EVERDOWN

Sicken

Tooth & Nail

Here's another album that took a while to grow on me, but gets me rollicking around the office in mock hardcore air guitar jumps and mosh lurches. Kurt and Joey of The Trauma Team certainly dialed in some killer guitar, bass and drum sounds. Heck, the vocals sound fuller than any punk album, too. The tunes "Shelter" and "Two" both start off with punk blasts before muscling into a more metallic groove.

I knew I'd love this band's debut album back when their first demo as Dry Bones came out. Sometimes there's bands who write great songs, and sometimes there's bands that write good songs, but they write 10 in a row. I think I might like these guys on record

song for song better than The Crucified's albums -- although they've yet to write a tune bigger 'n' badder than "Mindbender," nor have they mesmerized me with their intensity live like the Cruc used to every time. I find this album a good listen all the way through, thanks to exceptional songwriting and tough, tough riffs.

If these songs won't get a crowd moshing, they're dead! Like The Crucified, these guys know how to write real lyrics that hit home and preach harder than blunt "preachy" lyrics. "He seals his fate and his destiny without God/ his shelter is sin." ("Shelter") Although most all the grooves are great, the riffs in "Sicken" and "Shelter" are most memorable.

Everdown kicks butt.

--DV

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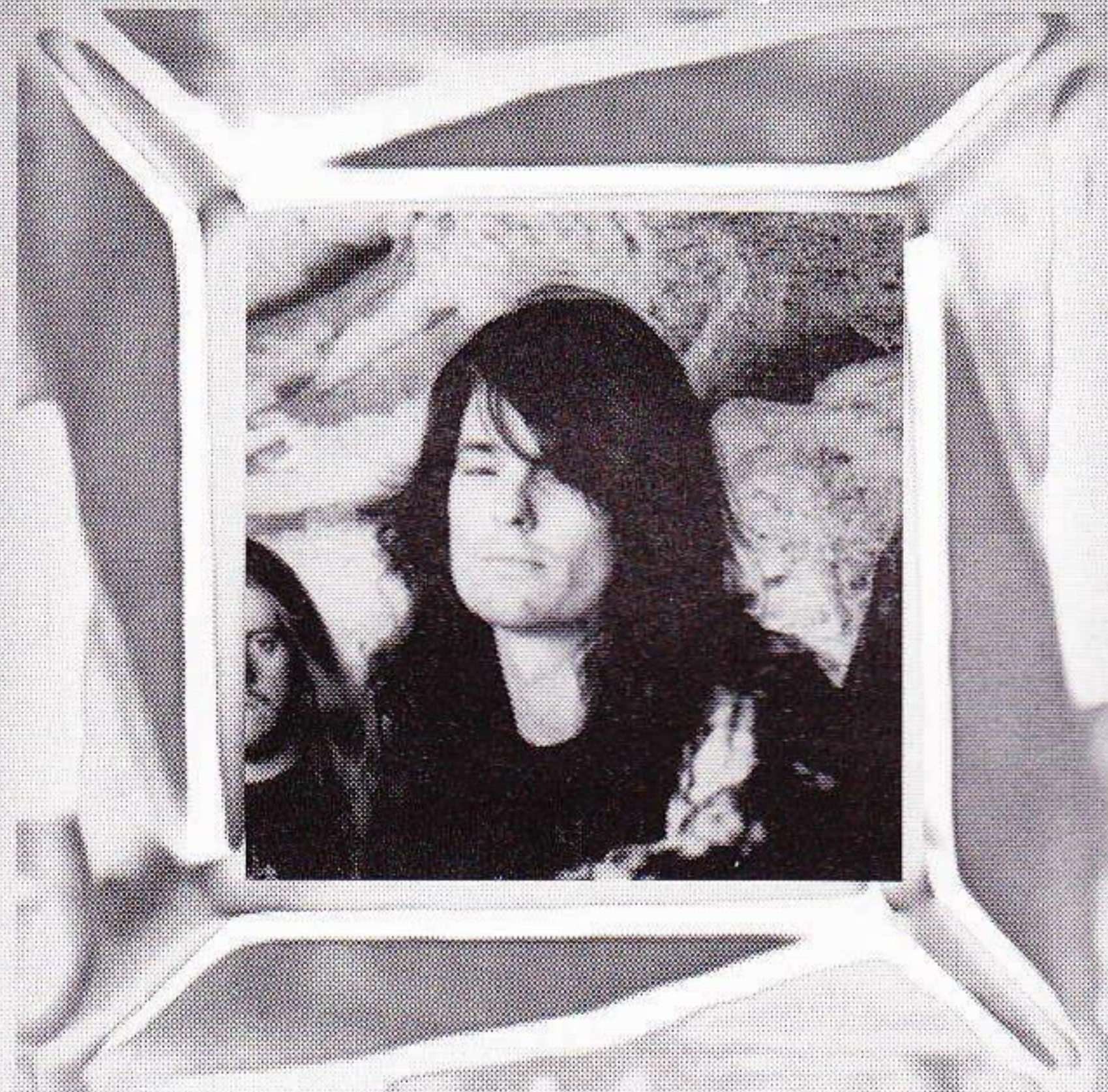
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#4 Favorite Live Band

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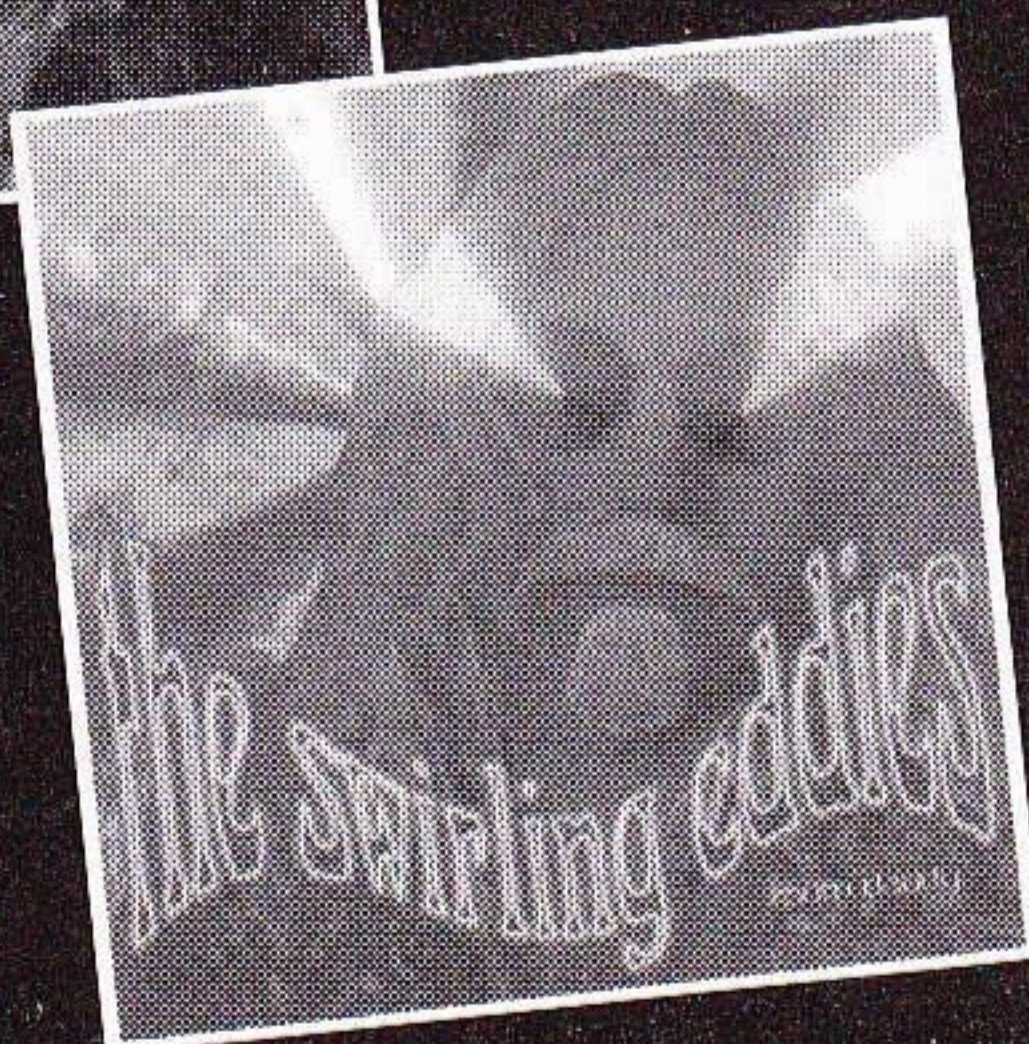


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bassist
Victor Macias



#2 Favorite
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congratulations to...

#3 Favorite BandMortification
#3 Favorite Album CoverBlood World
#4 Favorite DrummerJayson Sherlocke
#4 Favorite SingerLuke Easter
#4 Favorite ProducerBlood: Jyro/Jerome
#5 Favorite LyricistEric Clayton

ZAXAS

Zaxas

Noise

A phone call to a small mainstream indie led me to discover this band. While explaining why we aren't going to review one of their bands, I was told, "We've got a Christian metal band!" Then I was sent this CD of a powerful melodic metal band that talks about "the anvil" that "stands alone" in their songs. Besides their stand for God's Word, how can you knock a band that expresses regret for voting for Bill Clinton (in "Lies In The Balance"): "This time you fooled me/ You played all the tricks/ Now it's no wonder why they called you slick . . . Changing your hair for the crowd I was in/ 'Say whatever they want, man, just as long as you win.'"

Musically, the band rocks very hard, while still maintaining commercial hooks, and vocalist Dale Anthony sings with the conviction and

sound of Dio.

Like Veni Domine, Zaxas is one great power metal band that begs being checked out by you -- the dormant classic metal fan. I guarantee you'll freak out. If you can't find this in mainstream stores, write Noise Records at: 8721 Sunset Blvd, Hollywood CA 90069.

--DV

JOHN SCHLITT

Shake

Word

Okay, here's a real mixed bag. You've got the syrupy-est ballads you've ever heard from Petra's lead vocalist; and you've also got the gnarly 'n' dirty guitar tone in a rocker like "Wake The Dead" (courtesy Mr. Dann Huff).

The biggest difference you might notice between this album and Petra albums is the approach to choruses. The lead-off track, "Wake The Dead," doesn't follow the

common anthemic chorus formula found in Christendom's favorite rock cheerleaders. Instead, there's a complimentary hook that is subtle but strong. I guess you could say the songwriting here is more complex in a melodic way. The BGV's are stacked, but not in a "wall of sound" way (the subtlety in songwriting again). Lyrically, we get an extra large dose of encouragement preaching: "Why can't we do what Jesus said/ And let the dead bury the dead?" ("Don't Look Back")

One of the highlights in listening to this record is the richness of the production. If you are turned off by the simplified hooks of the songs upon first listen, crank up the volume and notice the quality sonics. You'll notice there's more beneath the surface here. This album definitely is boosted with volume. Having the guitar gymnastics of Dann Huff certainly helps, as does his brother David's drumming. Petra fans are gonna love this

project, but the added sharpness here is going to attract a stronger following for this singer's talents.

--DV

SAVIOUR MACHINE

Saviour Machine II

Intense

The band of many ruffled feathers is back with another epic work of art. This self-produced record, funded by Frontline for European distribution, is a giant self-disclosure of Eric Clayton's life in the last two years (or so it seems). While at times maybe taking a martyr's complex, Eric seems to cry out for the bride of Christ to stop acting as hypocritical judges and truly "manifest the Son" by being loving and just. Some of the things he has keenly picked up is the legalism that many add to their faith in Christ, which he refers to as "their conditions of salvation/in which so blindly they defend."

By choosing words

Have You Experienced

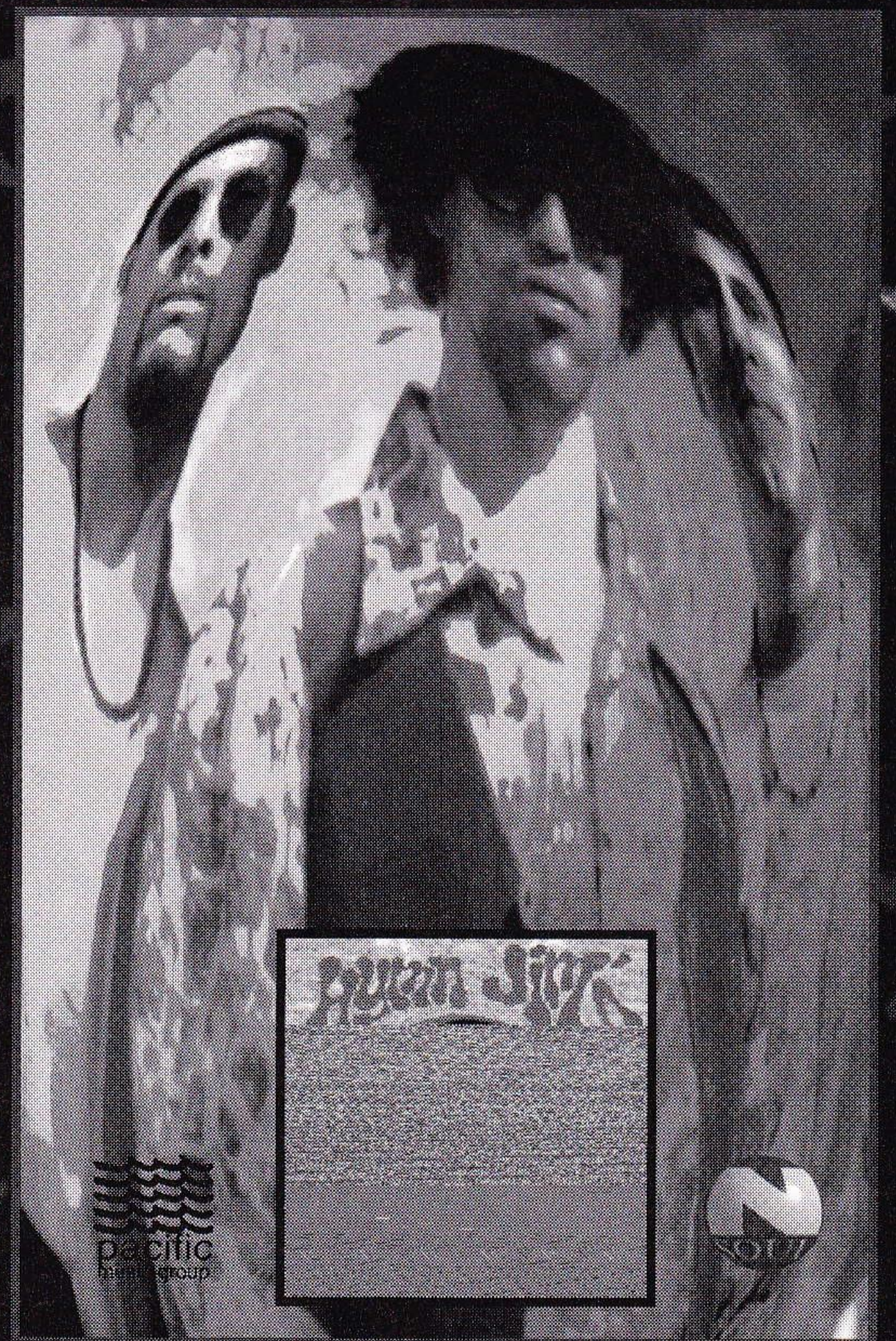
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like "the poltergeist" instead of Spirit, many will wonder if this music is safe for consumption. I would recommend digesting some Daniel Amos before coming here, so your eyes will be looking beneath the surface. There's lots to see here -- more than was apparent to myself in the few short days available before this deadline.

The music is beautiful and moving, not unlike the diversity and emotional landscapes of Pink Floyd.

--DV

STARFLYER 59

She's The Queen

Tooth & Nail

The kings of drone rock are back with a heavier sound than last time. Hearing Starflyer's music real loud helps make sense of what they're doing. They kind of emit a groove that pulsates like a heartbeat with guitar feedback just a breath away.

If you ever want to grab your emotions and bring them down, Starflyer is the perfect band to do it. Instead of the knockout punch that doomy metal uses, these guys will hypnotize you with their ethereal heaviness.

I have to admit, though, that the disco-type keyboard sounds in the "Joy Electric Mix" of "Blue Collar Love" is too techno pop for me. The rest of the album, though, is all "industrial Prozac" (as Butch of LC would say).

Like many other experimental artists, people will either love this music or be so alienated by it that they disdain it. Like it or not, though, Starflyer 59 is very effective at creating moods from their instruments, and that is to be commended. If you ever wanted to take pop music and give it a slow, grueling death, this is the way.

--DV

HYMN JIM

HYMN JIM'S GOSPEL GEMS

N•Soul

I grew up in the 70's. The only thing I didn't like

about that decade was disco. I spent many a time shouting something to my fellow high schoolers about disco applying suction as they opted for the aftergame dances. Going into this album review is somewhat difficult for me, since I have this anti-disco bias. The good hype I heard about this 70's retro album was that some of the Hendrix-inspired funk a la Lenny Kravitz would be found here. So, let me say, there's songs on this album that get me jammin' in approval and others that make me cringe. Going retro has its downside, since not all of history is worth repeating, in my mind.

The lead-off track, "People Get Ready" (yes, the same tune you've heard both Darrell Mansfield and Rod Stewart cover) is a prime example of when Hymn Jim shines brightest. All the heavy elements of an electric funk approach are here, along with an already winning melody, and some attitude in the vocal delivery. All this changes by the very next song, though, as the popular worship song, "Shine, Jesus Shine," is covered in a drippy 70's leisure suit "retro disco" format. Ugh! The third song, "Trib' to the Faw's" moves with groove and a cool guitar tone, albeit subdued. Another light moment is the worship tune, "I Will Call," which is done very well in a Euro-pop vocal style a la Roger Rose (Mad At The World). Another direction that's gone after here is the humorous bluegrass sound in the tune "River of Life." Funny, but cornier than the Jolly Green Giant.

The general idea here for Shane Ries (son of Calvary Chapel pastor Raul Ries) was to do a complete 70's retro album -- complete with 12-track recording technology. The idea works, but it will probably be more successful holding the strutting dance audience rather than the heavy rock crowd. This is undoubtedly due to trying to cover more musical ground than possible and still keep an audience faithful. I, of

course, wish Shane would've gone for a louder, bolder guitar sound all the way through, like in a Jimi Hendrix direction. These *Gospel Gems* are presented in an authentic way that takes you back to a diverse decade.

--DV

VENI DOMINE

Material Sanctuary

Thunderload Records

Okay, as a music

critic writing in 1995, I'm obligated to notify you that this is operatic, classic power metal. Having said that, these guys are performing a style that's not currently riding the crest of the latest trend, let me say that these guys perform their art with excellence.

The sonics and emotions here are pristine and dramatic. Veni Domine eases through mood changes with a relaxed ease that keeps the songs flowing -- even though most are long in length.

While writing lyrics that stay true to the gothic metal

tradition, they are intelligent and real: "Then I felt the presence of Someone so close/ He spoke to me in languages I never heard before/ looked at me with eyes/ that were healing my wounded soul." ("The Meeting") The heavy power chords performed here will remind you why you started headbanging in the first place. This would be a good one to listen to with headphones -- with swirling gothic choir vocals and atmospheric guitar layerings moving about in harmony with the rhythm. You could say Veni Domine is a "full" metal band.

Fans of Dream Theater and all those who thought power metal was dead will rejoice at the power and melodic sense of a band that does it right -- Veni Domine. (I just hope you can find in here in the U.S. I've held off reviewing this to avoid causing frustration in trying to obtain it. Try Rad Rocker's.)

--DV



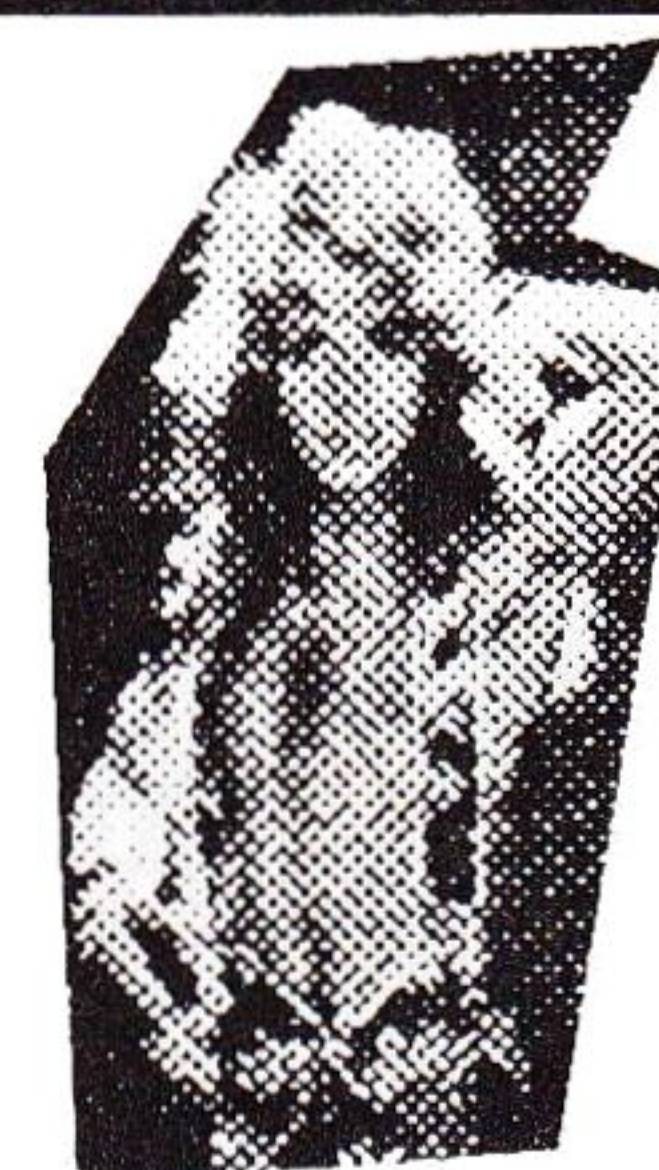
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Stryper full color 4'x6' photo Billboard used to promote Stryper's 1984 one-&-only concert ever at The Roxy on Sunset Strip. Autographed by Robert Sweet.

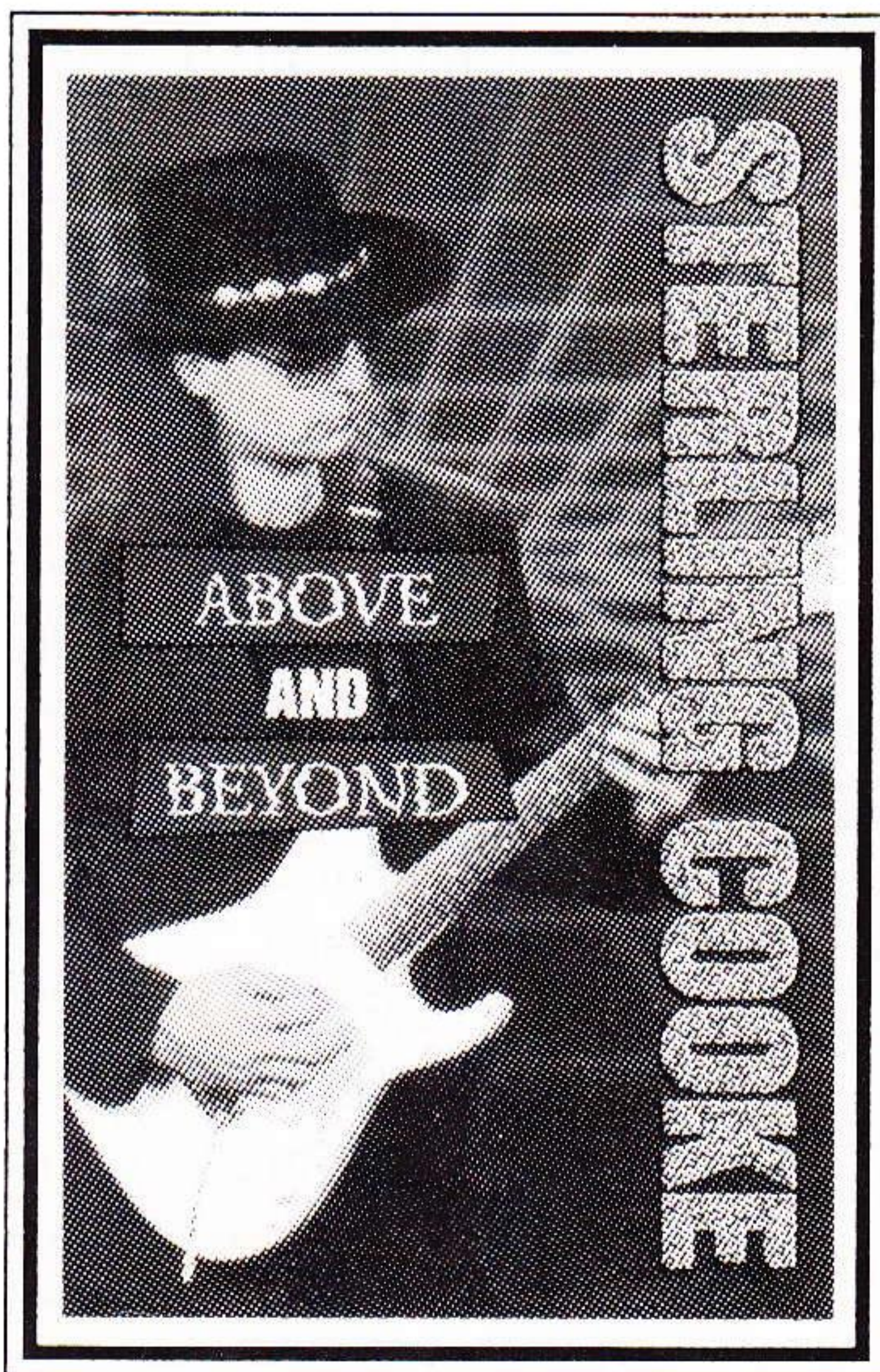


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VELOCPEDE

Sane

R.E.X.

The debut release by this creative twosome is an original approach to heavy pop. I'd cite *Balance of Power* era Undercover as an influence here, as the vocals of Dann Gunn are very passionate. The bass throbs and drives most of the tunes. Fans of Euro-alternative pop (like Mad At The World), as well as some classic metal fans both can find something to like here -- in every song! It's an odd blend of styles that works fairly well.

To break it down would be over simplified, but take some standard 80's metal rhythms, play them with grunge sounds tuned in, and sing atop it like a duet between Sim Wilson and David Bowie.

After the first couple of listens, I didn't care if I ever heard it again, but repeated listenings have made me look harder at the energy and emotion of these songs. The weakness of the album would be the somewhat tiring range the rhythm section stays in through almost every song. In other words, this band sounds best, perhaps when you pull one song out and play it against the backdrop of other artists' songs (like the *Demo-Lition II* album). One song to highlight here is the brooding hooks in "I Catch My Breath/ I Let It Go," where Mr. Gunn's vocals dance a little bit atop the music in a relaxed mode.

As with most brooding musicians, it's too minor influenced to be instantly grabbing, but there's something for those modern rock fans who go ga ga over Undercover.

--DV

TOURNIQUET

Pushin' Broom

Intense (Video)

Here's an excellent video package value priced at \$10.99. Much like the *HM Video Mag* that I find myself working on, there's some up-close interviews spliced in with background action and a rolling scrapbook of photos. The interviews are very visually appealing, using just a simple 2-camera setup that warms the interview.

The video for the tune "Bearing Gruesome Cargo" is very good. The band's playing in a small room with a small halfpipe that a few skaters do some riding on while the band plays. It presents the band in the best video image they've been afforded, helping boost their already good image. Some of the shots and camera pans are just awesome. While looking like a somewhat limited budget affair, the director/producer did a great job utilizing the tools at his disposal. Pulling this song

from the rest of the album gives "Bear-ing..." a bigger life than it had nestled on the album. The groove is really cool and stands taller than the vocal hook that initially attracted me to the song.

One of the best things that comes out loud and clear on this video is the humor of the band. This is most notable in a short interview segment with Ted Kirkpatrick, where he lists off two of his biggest drumming influences -- Gilligan, and Bobby Brady -- while we see footage of these two TV personalities jamming away.

Pushin' Broom doesn't compete with a mega-budget Metallica video, but it could certainly be played on MTV with no shame. For those of you who bought *Video Biopsy* and were disappointed, this one is way better.

--DV

BRIDE

Here's an official European limited edition live recording of one of Christendom's hottest rock bands -- Bride. This unit knows how to create a mood and move with it in concert, and this full-length CD captures it.

The sonics are weak in the vocal category only -- as Dale's vocals are about totally dry (no effects). This detracts from the performance, as you can't quite crank the music loud enough to drown out the vocal inadequacies.

All this is shoved aside by the time the band rolls into the extension of "Hired Gun," when the band kicks into the "In My Time of Dying" Zeppelin hat tip and Dale does some wailing moans. An even better moment is during the break-down during "Under The Influence," with the band's excursion into "Bullet The Blue Sky." By the time the album reaches this point, the vocal sonics seem to be a little beefier. This carries over to the songs that follow, like "Thorns," "Everybody Knows My Name," and "Murder."

The album ends with two songs acoustically performed. "I Miss The Rain" sounds exceptionally well, as does a new one called "How Long." For those of you who've never heard a bootleg live recording before, you'll think, "What's wrong with the sound?" Those who have will appreciate this as an above average live recording. All Bride fans should get ahold of this, but there's only 2,000 being printed, so you'll have to act quickly. For ordering info in the U.S., look at the Rad Rocker's ad this issue. Europeans can get it directly from the source -- Stephans-Buchhandlung, M. Mittelstadt, KG, 97070 Wurzburg, Germany.

--DV

BRIDE (Video)

Wow! This is the coolest opportunity around. At the same time, you can buy a CD of Bride live in Germany and also buy a video of Bride live in Brazil. Recorded last Fall, this video totally shreds! We're talking 10 cameras being used and great audio (at least for the indoor show). First off is a full-length performance in front of a packed house of 6,000. We also get highlights of outdoor shows in front of 80,000 and 130,000 on back-to-back nights.

While the packaging isn't a nice four-color box, the video is a world-class recording that no fan of Christian hard music should be without. I can't think of anything negative to say about this first portion of this video, as the only downer comes in the outdoor footage, which wasn't lit as brightly as the indoor show; and the audio sounds a little weak. In contrast to the live CD, the audio here on the indoor portion (8 songs)

is rock solid.

To order, send \$15 (Overseas add \$7 postage) to: Bride, 295 Churchview Rd, West Point, KY 40177.

--DV

Various Grrr Artists

Pet Projects

Grrr

This compilation video has six cool videos that are held together with humorous and honest interview segments of the artists (Crashdog, REZ, Glenn Kaiser, The Crossing, and Cauzin' Efekt). This really adds the much-needed human element to the often larger-than-life images of concept videos. It's great to hear Glenn's heart on worship in his interview.

The surprise hit here is the stellar video for The Crossing. The mixture of beautiful outdoor footage and the authentic Celtic music and many voices makes a world-class video.

Crashdog's video for

"Voice of Defiance" is cool, with tons of attitude and action. The interviews help set it up perfectly, too. Where else would you hear great quotes like, "There are 90 year old ladies that I would consider hardcore." (Spike Nard).

This is definitely a fine representation of the Grrr roster.

--DV

DAKODA MOTOR CO.

Welcome Race Fans

Word (Video)

Here's a cool 4-song video package that showcases the fun, frolicking punk of Green Day . . . er, uh, I mean Dakoda Motor Co. Besides the treat of seeing Peter King snow board off the roof of the Red Roof Inn, we see some absolutely great videos with awesome cinematography. These first two videos (directed by Steve Taylor) should be on MTV.

--DV

DAVID BENSON

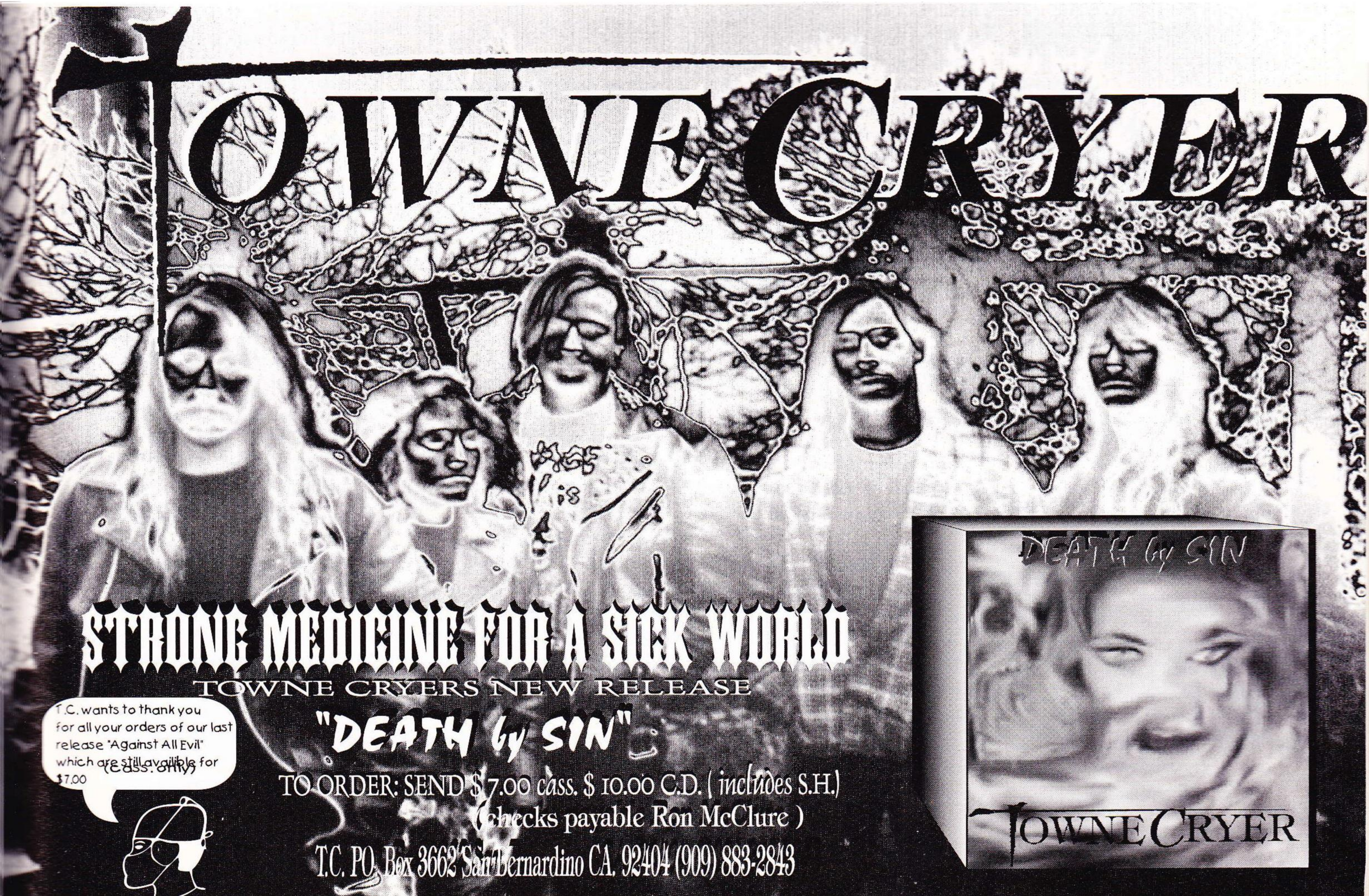
Holy Psychotherapy

Viva

As a music critic, one has to bring up the "originality issue" while reviewing this disc. Does the Christian music scene need a "sanctified Ozzy?" Do we need another copycat "Christian version" of someone else? Obvious answers aside, most of us will want to own a copy of this for novelty reasons. We can play it for our friends and say, "Hey, check out the new Ozzy album."

"America Wake Up" is a rip-off of the Sabbath riff of "War Pigs." The title track is more like the first two Ozzy solo albums, with biting 80's metal riffs. Some of the other tunes, like "Ichabod," are so slow that they don't hold interest as long. Maybe if that slow bass line was a bit nastier in the mix...

Lyrically, David tries to get the listener to think about what he's being fed. If the music wasn't so dated, he'd



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hold the listener a lot longer,
though.

--DV

GROMS

Ascension

Arctic Serenades
GROMS from

Norway have become a first-class Christian metal band. I thought I would hear more demos from the band after reviewing their last demo in the Fall. I was wrong. Now they are back with a full-length CD packed with earth-shaking, brutal and awesome death metal.

GROMS, which is an acronym for "God Rules Over My Soul," have done things right since Turn. The band is now reduced to four members. The vocalist left the band a while ago and Oyvind, one of the guitarists, have taken his place. That's what makes GROMS a totally different band. The combination of the band's new musical style and the steady and powerful

grinding from Oyvind's throat has resulted in a great album. The songs and the lyrics, the playing, the dark and convincing grinding, and the sonics are top notch in every sense -- except the final cut, which was recorded last Spring. The other nine songs were recorded in October and show a band that has progressed noticeably during a few short months.

This is the first Christian death metal album from Norway. It's surprisingly good. In fact, it's one of the best death metal CD's -- Christian or secular -- I have tortured my ears with lately.

--Anders Joh Blisten

The Raise The Dead

Attention all extreme metal fans: You can find your fill of high-quality grindage and noise. Australia delivers again... but even better! After hearing some slight variation in quality on the *Godspeed* compilation, I was expecting a letdown or two on this one.

Not so! The bands, Ethereal Scourge, Screams of Chaos, Embodiment, Metanoia, and Vomoth all turn in impressive performances -- and they're all captured with sonic quality.

Ethereal Scourge has a terrific crunch and a knack for good time changes. It's like classic thrash with grind vocals. This band will impress you with its tightness.

Screams of Chaos is the one-man project (with help from his friends) of Mortification video producer Neil Johnson. Mixing drama with a concept, his three-part overture is called "The Plague." The first part has a metallic industrial-style attack and a story line. Very cool. Part II is more atmospheric and ballad-like. Part III jumps back into frenetic industrial mode a la Circle of Dust -- complete with some talented bass tapping. Truly jamming! I'd love to see the short film available for this project.

Embodiment tackles

their music with authority, attitude, and a wall of sound. These guys wail! The leads scream. The vocals are of a wide, breathing grind variety. One thing I really like about this grindcore music is the groove sensibilities thrown in. Truly a commercial death metal band (Aarrgh! I bet Embodiment would hate to hear that!) Too technical for their own good, these guys are totally hot.

Metanoia creates an ominous, doomy mood with its song intros and dives head first into progressive jamming under a bellowing grind vocal. Musicians will dig the intricate jamming and talent displayed, while those vocals will limit the band's appeal to grindcore crowds, but this crowd will embrace the band as creative and authentic. A noteworthy song is "Eternal Destruction," which starts off with some cool Aboriginal Didgeridoo playing and flies into 100 mph snare blasting.

Vomoth, like Horde,

takes on the eerie and wailing style of black metal (an annoyingly extreme style of music for mainstream headbangers) from the opposite lyrical angle. Befitting to such an extreme genre, the lyrics make no bones about the power in the blood of Jesus and the weakness of demon spirits to God's power. You need to hear this cut if not just for the education about this genre. I think the general vocal style was created to emulate Hollywood's most sinister demon vocals.

It's amazing that Rowe found five acts of extreme competence and style. This album shreds! To order, send \$16 to: Rowe Productions, PO Box 339, Mentone, Vic, 3194, Australia.

--DV

IGNITE

The heavy of heavy metal monks have finally debuted on CD with seven tunes. While the concept of this band seems comical -- three older guys in monk's robes belting out a low end motorcycle blues rock complimented with classic metal leads -- their music is actually quite good. While the vocals aren't pretty or extreme, they're tough enough to carry the tunes. Since the band's image isn't present on this album cover, most consumers won't be thrown off and will like the music first. Lyrically, the band often delves into the world of the occult imagery to point the way to Christ. Good stuff.

To order, send \$10 to Rowe Productions.

--DV

MATTHEW BASSO

Anytime someone says they remind people of Led Zeppelin's music, I sit up and take notice -- and judge them more critically. So, it was with curiosity that I reviewed this 9-song offering by Mr. Basso. Right away, this guy proves an intimate relationship with his guitar. Although one could say he ripped off the acoustic/esoteric side of Zeppelin, he doesn't mimic Robert Plant. Although he recorded this over six months ago, it is the perfect time to mention his project, with the Plant/Zeppelin album release and Zeppelin reunions happening.

Sonically, these songs sound both beautiful and cutting. There is clean production and good layering of sound. If given the chance, this guy could rule the classic rock airwaves. Occasional weaknesses are spotted in the vocal department as the delivery strains a little bit (not too unlike Steven Patrick). Overall, though, this is a top-notch custom recording. To order (strongly recommended), send \$6 to:

1822 Monument Rd NW, Canton OH 44709.

--DV

CRUCIAL KICK

This band from Australia brings quality melodic heavy rock with a, ahem, kick. When it comes to melodic hard rock, I haven't heard a new band do it so well in a long, long time. Although much heavier than White Heart has ever been, the vocalist (Martin Walker) sounds similar to Rick Florian and Foreigner's Lou Gramm. This band sounds like they're ready for big audiences. The tune "Your Eyes" could reign on FM radio right now. Crucial Kick leaves no holes in its attack, concentrating all the instruments (vocals included) on the hook at hand. The vocals and progressions in "Disguise" remind me a bit of 20/20 Blind.

The hook-filled chorus in "Faith (Table of Life)" is a memorable moment: "Come and sit at the table/ Come and eat at the table of life."

As far as melodic metal goes, I'd have to say (with journalistic intrepidity) that these guys are near-perfect. It's that good! It doesn't sound contrived. They do it with a relaxed feel, like it was no big deal to make music this good.

To order a CD, send \$12 to: PO Box 2777, Barker 3122, Australia (Make checks payable to Malcolm Pryor).

--DV

BLOOD BATH

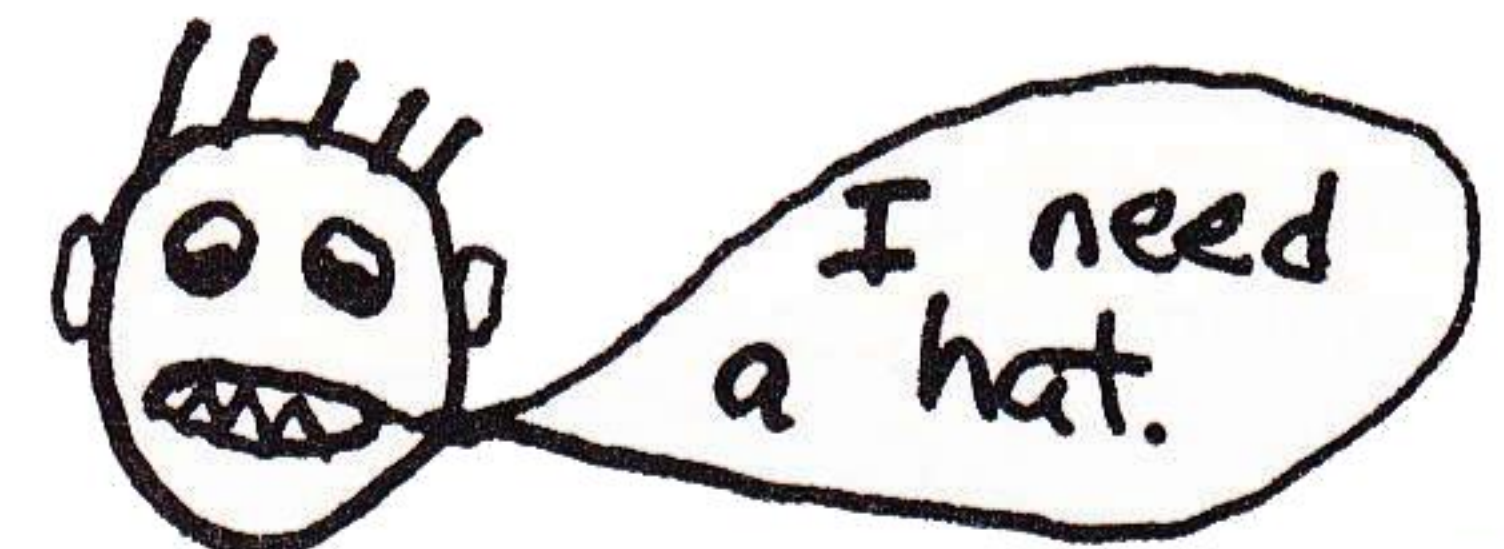
The Karrunch mongers from Hawaii are back with a 5-song tape of most heavy music. Some of the grooves are really cool, like in "Cathartic Release of Aggression." Fans of technical metal and total thrash are gonna eat this tape, titled "Fattened & Slaughtered," right up. Check out the biting guitar tones in the opening of "Consequences for the Convicted," and you'll be hooked. For ordering info, write: PO Box 3911, Mililani, HI 96789.

--DV

WICKEDS END

I love it when a guitarist dials in a good tone, which is evident here on this Wicked's End release. I love this 8-song album! "The Drive By" is an incredibly killer tune with hardcore metal rap delivery a la XL. It's aggressive, punchy, and loud! Besides getting a chance to hear the heaviest rap on tape right now (since XL isn't signed anymore), you can also hear Brett's (the vocalist) testimony in the tune "Testimony" over a heavy groove that Bride would be proud of.

For ordering info, check out the



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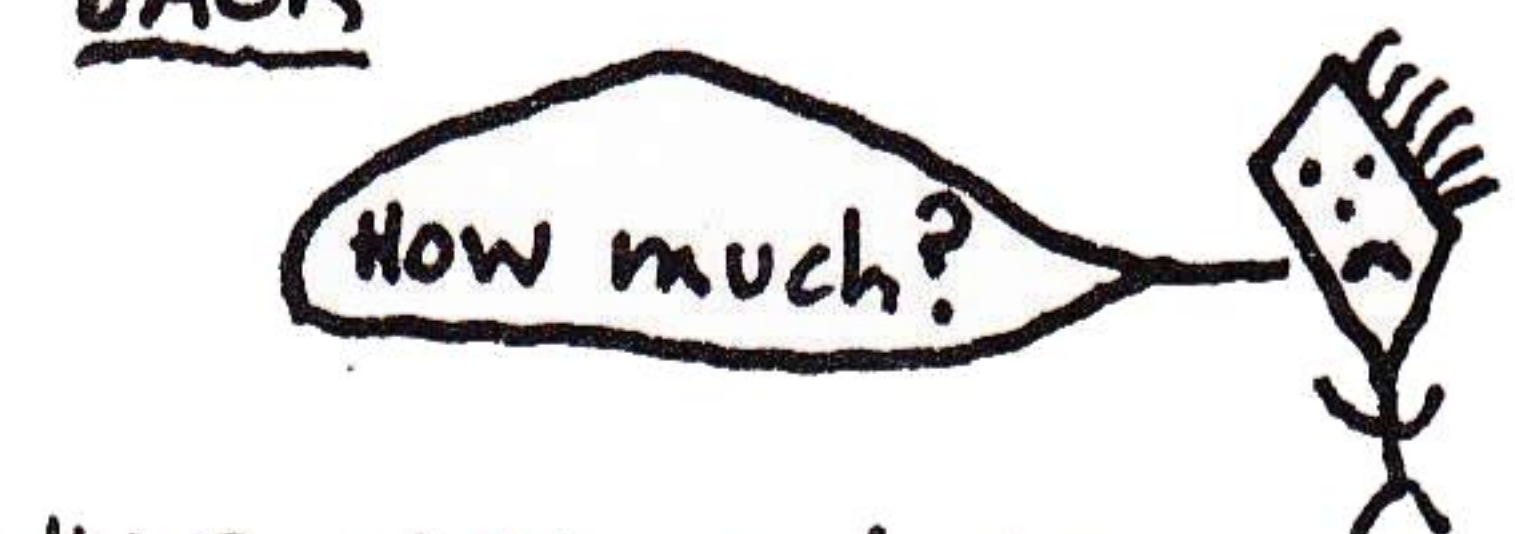


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Floppy Fish ad this issue.
--DV

THORN CROWN

Okay. "Thorn Crown" . . . Another death metal band name, right? Wrong! Think Pearl Jam. Cool, brooding guitars create a low end groove. The vocals throughout are good, often using many voices to harmonize. Definitely one for the grunge generation, these 11 songs are packaged in sonic clarity, making for a good, laid-back listen. If I were a label, I'd probably be glad to just take this project as is and get it out there. For ordering info, write: Jon-Paul LeClair, 10595 Morgan Rd, Cato, WI 54206.
--DV

FISH TRIBE

Here's an excellent collection of four tunes that move, groove, and have something to say. Mixing a little funk with the groove-intense hardcore philosophy of

The Crucified, and performing it with driven sonics makes for a clean 'n' dirty rock bonanza. I hear a little Scapegoat in the vocal delivery of Matt Prainito, and I hear big 'n' gnarly Groove (capital G) from the other three in the band. Killer stuff that's totally current and very heavy. For ordering info, see Floppy Fish ad this issue.
--DV

APOSTLE

Guitar shredder and "wah-yahhh!" vocalist, Matt Harding, is back with another Apostle album, called Prepare To Meet God. As its title suggests, it's power metal that flexes its muscle in your face. My first piece of advice would be to "prepare to meet 80's metal," as Apostle seems to have chosen not to deviate from its formula of melodic roaring amidst rapid-fire riffing. As far as the fusion of gothic and commercial heavy metal goes, this band does it very well. Some of Matt's screaming leads are blazing. Songwriting-wise,

though, Matt puts together pieces that make sense. One of the best moments comes in the melodic "Beatitudes." There's some real melodic moments in the song "In The New Love," with its really commercial vocal hook in the chorus. I never knew they had it in them. They ought to explore this more.

Available from Bangin' Productions. For band info, write: LifeForce Records, 4567 Blount Ave, Jacksonville FL 32210.
--DV

SYNAGOG

Here's some piercing high leads, rough 'n' ready vocals, solid drumming (with okay sounds dialed in) and a crunchin' rhythm section. These boys do classic metal right. As far as professional production goes, it's here in force. Although some of the riffs are formulaic, the music is very tough. Avoiding the mistake of many young power metal bands, the vocals here don't try to stretch beyond

operatic levels. Nice 'n' melodic works perfectly . . . and it's much nicer on the ears!

To order, send \$5 to:
1930 E. Princeton, Fresno CA 93703.

--DV

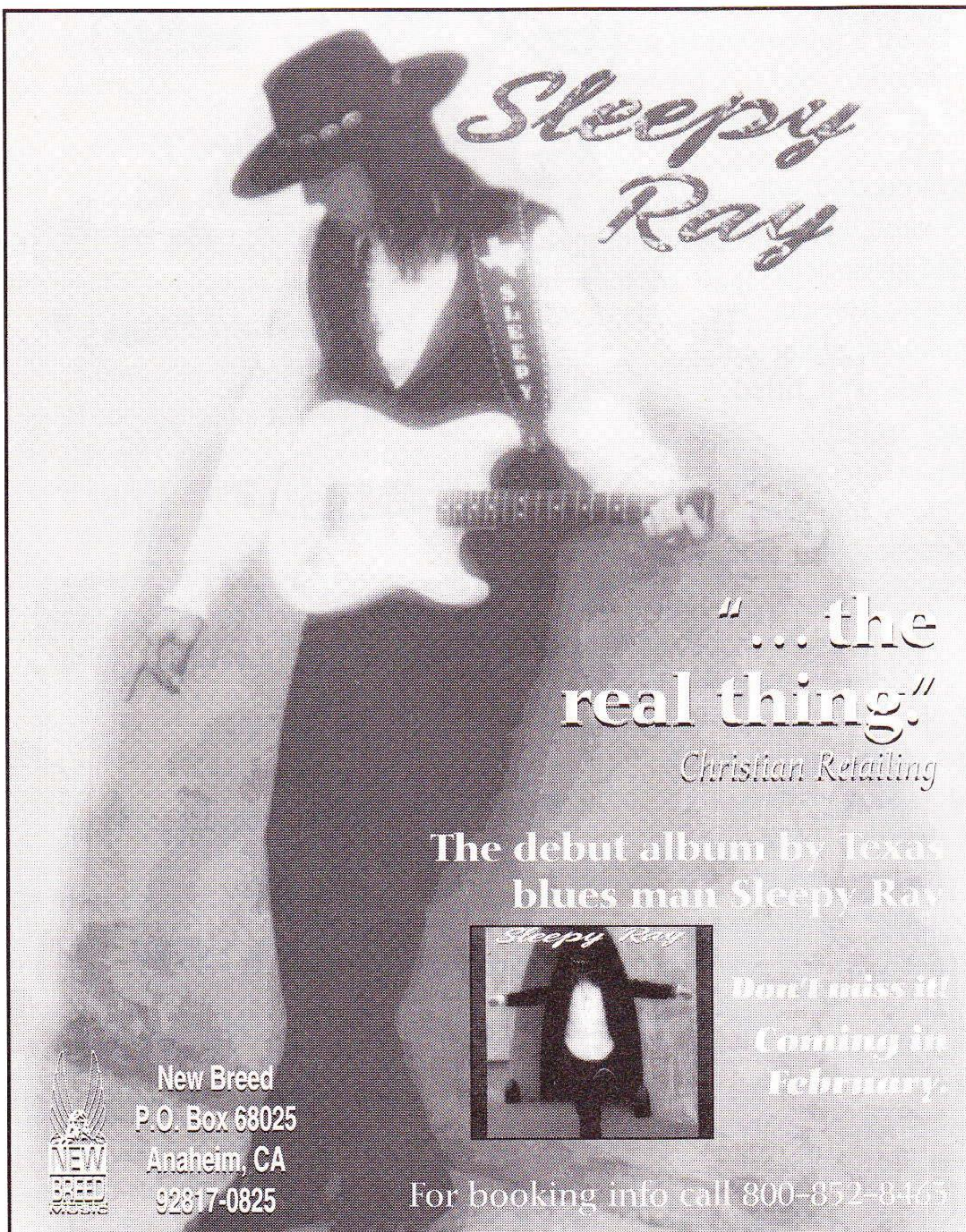
JOEY SPIEDO

Here's an 8-song tape with some very good guitar leads, but hampered by vocals that don't pull the listener in. The best vocal moment happens in "Saving Grace," where images of Dave Menikette of Y&T come to mind (or Contagious). To order, send \$7 to: Cross Keys, Lot 188, Duncansville PA 16635.

--DV

TEFILLA

Here's some heavy tuneage with plenty of progressive thrash riffs a la Believer, yet not backed up by a supertight rhythm section. The band excels at creating moods with its long intros and heavy keyboard sounds, juxtaposed



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with growling howling vocals. The band plays out an intense drama with the epic "The Judge On Litostrotos," about a selfish businessman standing before God and stating his case. There's even some female opera-type choruses that give this that eerie classical vibe a la Paramaecium and Believer. For ordering info, write: p/a J. Hofman, Zuiderdiep, 60, 9521 AX Nieuw-Buinen, The Netherlands.

--DV

GLENN ROWLANDS

Here's some cool Axl Rose-ish acoustic ballads with plenty of grit and passion. Ahh, those two important elements -- grit and passion. It makes the lyrics and the music come alive. The acoustic guitar and mandolin-sounding strumming gives some of these tunes a cool Zeppelin-esque feel. It's not all acoustic by any means. The title track, for instance, cops kind of an Eagles feel, and the riff on the tune "Rain" is anything but laid back. Glenn's voice is the strength here that all the songs capitalize on. His passion in "Reign On Me" evokes a cool worshipful vibe with its prayer of "send me down some of your love."

This full-length CD release is a good listen, although some of the mood swings are dramatic. For ordering info, see Floppy Fish ad this issue.

--DV

SERCHER

This 9-song tape, called *Exodus*, is a pleasant listen of melodic metal with a bite. (I bet they use Charlie Stringer's "Snarling Dogs" guitar strings!) Some of the vocals sound a bit dry and soulfelt -- kinda like an Alice in Chains tune (the title track being the best example). The guitars carry this band far into the listener's cranium. It's good to see such a healthy crop of custom releases reviewed in this issue. While having a slightly cleaner side than Tooth & Nail's best bands (who are probably Sometime Sunday & Wish For Eden), these guys are hip. Lyrically, Sercher (pronounced like searcher) bridge the gap between everyday life and eternal life, making no bones about Who the Author of Life is.

For ordering info, write: Craig Wallace, 705 Brown Rd, Brighton IL 62012.

--DV

PERSEVERANCE

It should be a crime for someone to have this much talent. Besides playing drums for Dallas' hot death metal band Oblation, Billy Fraser has put out this side

project, where he plays all the instruments. He describes the music as "old school hardcore/punk with a little thrash," and the lyrics are very Bible-based. The vocals are shouted here, instead of typical thrash style. The production is decent and, unfortunately, it sounds better turned down, but Billy deserves an A+ for all the effort he put forth here. To order, send \$3 to: Billy Fraser, 5506 Round Rock, Garland, TX 75044.

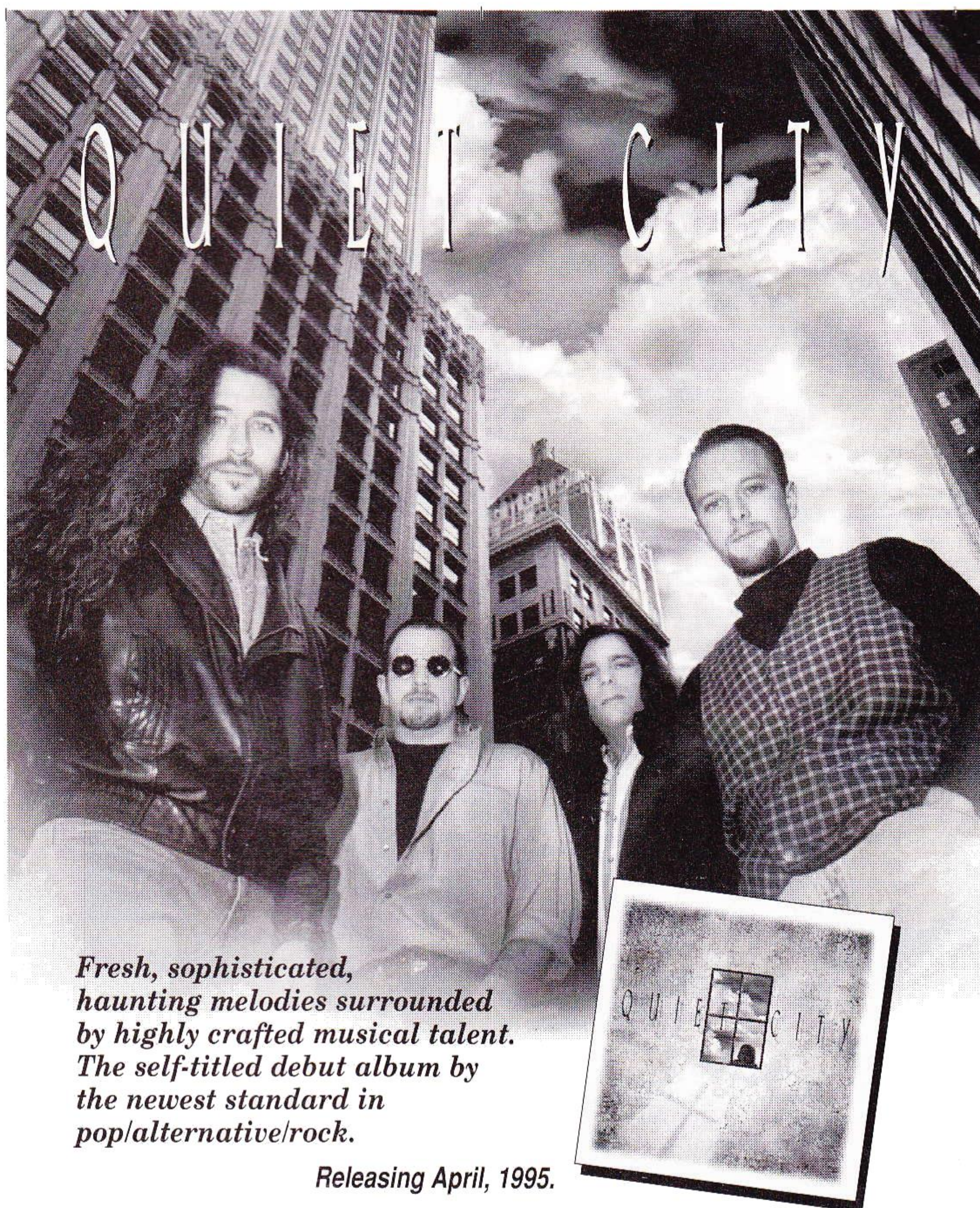
--Jeff Lott

PROJECT X

Of all the "creative type" projects

I've reviewed, this is by far the best. This is not music for the typical headbanger. In fact, they would probably get bored after the first song -- "On Trial," which is a little over nine minutes in length.

Vocals are done by Greg Ryan, and everything else is done by Dwayne Woodbury. This man's talent is incredible. There is so much going on throughout this tape that, after a half-dozen listens, you might finally get to the lyrics. The only bad thing I would say about Project X is that I wonder how many people are eclectic enough to enjoy this. "Images of a Fallen World" is music to be appreciated, not just



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--JL

EMBODYMENT

Out of Arlington, Texas comes yet another quality death metal band. Gee, first was Oblation, then Disencumbrance, and now Embodiment. What's going on in the Metroplex?

There are five songs, with "Cryptic Descension" being an intro. We're talking brutal stuff here -- no wimps allowed. Great lyrics as well. "Internal corrosion day to day/ Has to be more to life than this/ Does a comforting God exist?" To escape suffering is to live my life according to you" ("Stillborn Natality"). While the production isn't as good as it could be, the total package is worth checking out. To order, send \$7 to: Jason Linquist, PO

Box 99601-306, Arlington, TX 76096.

--JL

ANTHEM

The best description for this band is aggressive commercial metal. There are five songs, very highly produced, and they sound great. Highlights are: "You're On Your Own," with its double bass. The drums sound great here, as well as in "High Above," with its Trytan guitar sound. This is one of the better demos I've heard. It really shines. I had a hard time hitting the stop button. For ordering info, write: Steve Lee, 60 Old Commack Road, King's Park, NY 11754.

--JL

AGAPE

While 70's retro is somewhat of a rage right now, some fine folks have re-released a pair of early, early Christian hard rock albums on CD. Some of it is really rockin', and

there's some cool jazz instrumentals as well -- especially on *Victims of Tradition* (circa 1972). There's some really traditional blues stuff on the *Gospel Hard Rock* album (circa 1971). A few of the highlights include the song "Blind." There's some tasty leads in "Freedom," and some cool Doors-type meandering in "Rejoice." You can order either of these CD's at \$19.98 each or both for \$34.98 (plus \$2 postage per CD). Write: Agape Communications, 2008 Aldermead Rd, Mississauga, ON, Canada L5M-3A7.

--DV

STRIKEFORCE

For older rockers who enjoyed the music of mid-80's bands like .38 Special or Motley Crue, Strike Force is a band you can't help but like. There are three songs here, but the first two -- "Judgement Day" and "Keep Fighting" -- are the better, more inspirational tunes, while "Hell On

Wheels" sounded more to me like the typical rebellious girlfriend/wife looking to party all night.

The production is decent and the music is melodic, so the thirty-something crowd should love this. For ordering info, call (314) 622-2946.

--JL

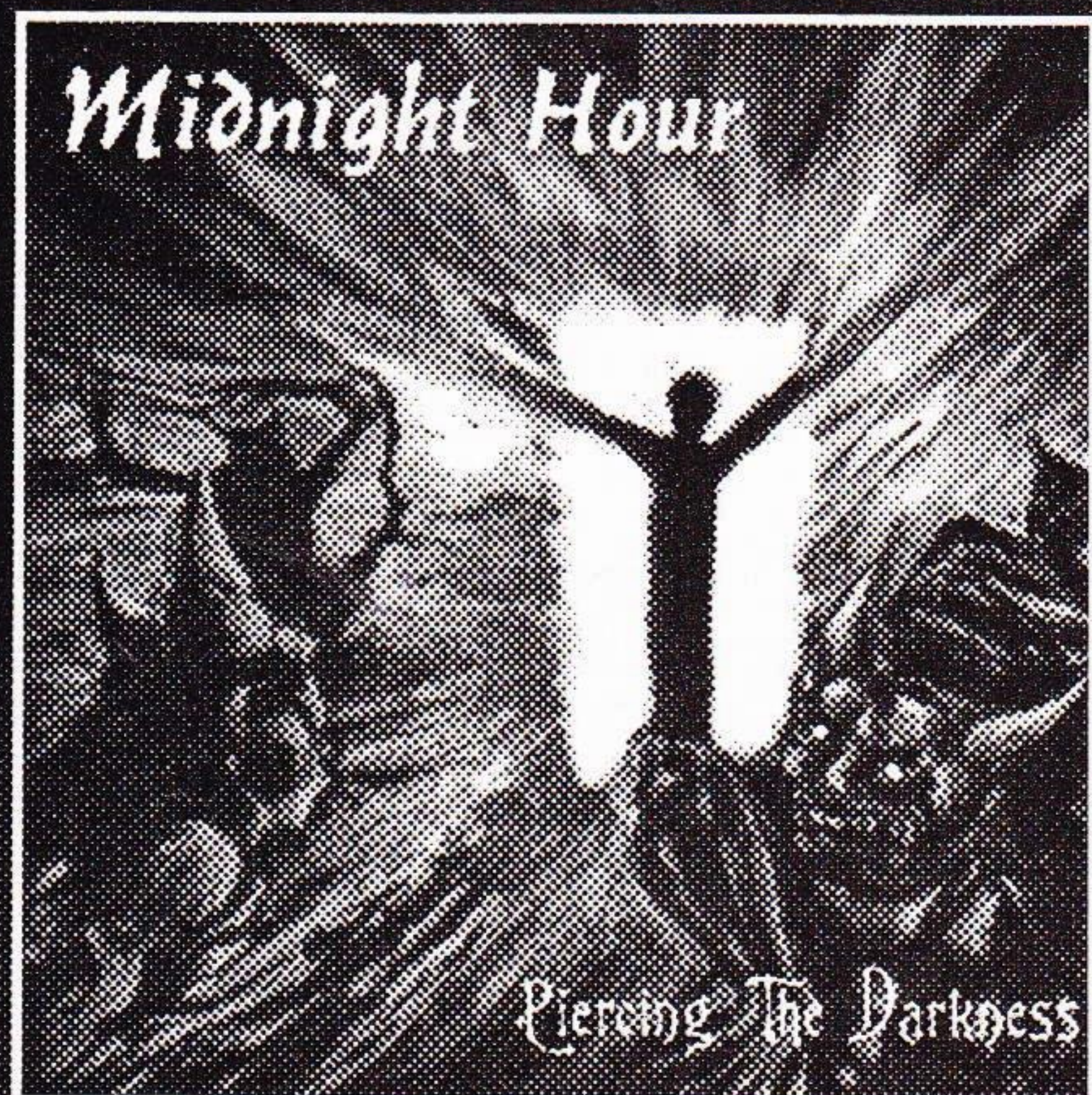
PURGE

Man, these guys write deep lyrics! Let me back up. Here is a very young band from Carl Junction, Missouri. I mean young! Too young to put out something this good! "The Joy of Throwing Things" is something I would expect out of someone in their mid-20's -- not 16 and 17 year olds! The music is death/thrash metal and, if the production was better (I hope the finished copy is), there would be nothing holding this band back. These are eight songs of pure sweat and energy. Lyrically, these guys put many older bands to shame. These guys are serious in every way.



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What more can I say? This is a must-have for metal fans. To order, send \$8 to: Mike Wilkerson, 204 Luke Pl, Carl Junction, MO 64834.

--JL

ROSSEY

This 2-song tape is really hot! Rossey Xavier's guitar playing is very technical and clean, yet his songwriting prowess is evident with melodic structures and direction. With this kind of performance on two songs, I eagerly await more from this guitar hero.

For ordering info, write: Av. Gossiaux 11, Brussels - Belgium.

--DV

PRINCESS

Princess (aka Tammy Winters) takes a tough Joan Jett meets Girlschool approach to a song about our Spiritual Brother, Jesus Christ, and His resurrection. Fans of straight-ahead metal will like this song ("Blood Brother") -- and be even happier to know they can have it for free (or a love gift). Guitarist Chris Steberl adds a really tasteful guitar instrumental called "Intercession," which compliments his commanding leads on "Blood Brother."

To order, write: Tammy Winters, PO Box 522, Westerville, OH 43081.

--DV

JOHNNY ORR

When I saw the cartoon caricature of Johnny Orr on the cover of his *Naked Bootleg*, I expected to hear green cheese on the inside. Instead, I found some very tasty and spicy jammin'. This guy tries to strangle his BC Rich guitar, and his voice is pleasant to boot! It's nice to see a musician who puts his efforts on CD and has something to say with it. Johnny's not one to push an agenda, but there's plenty of lessons and honesty in the songs here.

Those who enjoy hearing guitarists trying to make their guitar sing as loud and clear as their vocal chords

will like this *Naked Bootleg*. This is a much more serious project than the cover would hint at.

To order, send \$10 for CD, or \$6 for K, to: PO Box 58126, Raleigh NC 27658.

--DV

BROKEN SILENCE

Those of you who are kinda disappointed that Margaret Becker has mellowed out will be glad to hear vocalist Tracy King of Broken Silence belting out rockin' tunes that are certainly louder than silence.

I used to tell Margaret Becker when *Never For Nothing* first came out, "You know, we need a Christian metal queen," and she'd always reply, "Pray for Lita Ford." Maybe we should've been praying for Tracy King to start rockin' earlier. While not a metal queen, Tracy's band plays rock 'n' roll. Amy Wolter's solo album isn't too far from the style and sound explored here. Best song is probably the ballad "Say A Prayer."

For ordering info, write: PO Box 6248, Thousand Oaks CA 91359.

--DV

DENNIS BRACY

While he has a band now, the majority of this tape is a "creative-type" project. In other words, he did everything. First of all, the production is great, which allowed me to enjoy it all the more. There were no song titles or lyrics to look at, so reviewing it on the basis of music, I give it an A-. Queensryche and Dream Theater influences are all over the place, and boy, Dennis can wail! He's got a classic metal voice. Hey Dennis, did you let Paul Stanley sing guest vocals?

A first rate tape. I only wish the lyrics/song titles were here. For now, though, I'll have to force myself to hit the stop button. Well, maybe later. For ordering info, call (805) 772-5691.

--JL

ASCENSION

Ah, yes, my favorite music -- straight ahead metal. These guys perform it well. "Cosmic Highway" has a cool intro, called "Daddy, How Do You Get To Heaven?" The tune "Dreams of Gold" is a well-performed acoustic tune about one's eyes being open to God's salvation. You might need to turn it up a notch, as it seems the level was a little low, but the production overall is quite good. No metal fan should have a problem getting into these eight rockin' songs. For ordering info, write:

Floppy Fish Promotions, 243 N. Meridian #97, San Bernardino, CA 92410.

--JL

REV. SEVEN

The first thing I think of when I heard the vocals of Bill Menchen is the songs that Ace Frehley sang in his Kiss days. Rev. Seven's style is that of early to mid 80's metal, a la Ozzy Osbourne. Since I grew

up with that style, I really enjoyed it. From "Sabbath Breaker" to "Fire," this tape had my foot tapping so hard, I thought I would put a hole in the floor. The production is really good, so I had no problem turning this puppy up quite loud.

If you're into the current hardcore or death metal trend, you might think this tape is too wimpy, but those old Kiss or Motley Crue fans will eat this up. To order, send \$8 to: PO Box 93791, Las Vegas, NV 89193.

--JL

THE PASSION

There is some very mature rock here from this Indiana-based band. My best description would be heartland rock with a little restraint. There are six songs here, and all are great. My favorite is "Nails and the Cross." Vocalist Ray Benesh has a great voice for this style of music. Former Seraiah drummer Kyle Dietz lends his talents here, though

Pick of the Litter

GRAMMA TRAIN

In reviewing all the custom projects this season, there were plenty of excellent acts to choose from for this pick. Gramma Train gets my vote because of their quality songs, great performance, raging attitude, thoughtful lyrics, creative packaging, and, to top it all off, they've got a cool name to boot.

Tons of bands have jumped on the grunge train, but few seem to really capture the original vision that fueled

the whole movement. Gramma Train, residents of the rainy city, sound like they've done their homework. There's an honesty there.

I love the lyrics, too. "Sometimes I'm lost in a circle/ The beast of human nature breathing in my face/ And I won't pretend to ignore him/ Emotions start to sway, but truth won't fade away." ("Believe") There's also humor: "I know I

can be obscene/ I'm addicted to caffeine." ("Jerky Love Song") The funniest part, though, is the answering machine recordings at the end of the album, where people like Sometime Sunday's Mikee and Michael Bloodgood are calling up to tell the band they can't borrow their gear.



I guess the greatest asset to Gramma Train's sound is the full 'n' fuzzy guitar sound of Pete Stewart, who also lends his raspy, yet melodic voice to all the songs. The buzzin' bass

tone is pretty happenin' too, as in the tune "Lonely House."

I predict we'll continue to hear good things from these guys. Besides, the drummer is Paul Roraback from Bloodgood! For ordering info, write: Puppet Show Management, 4128 1/2 California Ave. SW #220, Seattle WA 98116.

--DV

the music doesn't have near the intensity of Seraiah. The production here is quite good. To order, send \$7 to: Kalobone Records, 5353 Cane Ridge Rd #502, Antioch, TN 37013.

--JL

ZADOK

I wouldn't be surprised if this band has a following in Puerto Rico, where they have the advantage of seeing them live . . . but this tape, unfortunately, doesn't give a good representation. First of all, it's all in Spanish, so I can't understand them. Secondly, the production is so poor, it wouldn't matter if it were in English. It would be unintelligible anyway. The talent is there, and hopefully, with a better produced tape, I could be kinder in a review. For now, all I want to do is take some aspirin. I've got a headache.

For ordering info, write: Rafael Ortiz, Pueblito Nuevo, Calle 2 #24, Ponce, PR 00731.

--JL

ROCK SOLID

Here is yet another musical blast from the past in the form of Rock Solid. There are seven songs here, and all are in that mid-80's L.A. invasion style. "Rockin' The Gates" is first off, about taking rock and roll away from Satan. "Holy Halos" has a slight Metallica vibe to it. Other songs like "Stolen Innocence" and "Pierce The Darkness" are straight-ahead metal. Nothing fancy here, just Rock Solid metal (pardon the pun). To order, send \$6 to: Tim Giesel, 129 Harmon Ct, Lagrange, OH 44050.

--JL

MISSIONARY ONE

Here's another one of those "creative types" -- you know, they do a project almost all by themselves. Anyway, there are six tunes for you to feast upon here. The style is similar in nature to Rose or Danzig, and that influence

really shines in the slower songs, like "The Future's Already Known." The sound quality is decent to good, so one can listen to it without getting a headache. I'd really love to hear another tape once this guy gets a band together. To order, send \$6.50 to: Chris Dickens, 229 Euclid Ave, Watertown, TN 37184.

--JL

MOTHERSHIP

What an original name! Mothership is a group of eclectic guys from Erie, PA. This five-song tape starts with a hardcore tune called "It Falls," then goes into what you think is going to be a dark sounding, mellow song called "Not a Breath." Just as you relax, it gives you a wake-up call. These boys sound better at 30 mph than at 90 mph, and, thankfully, they don't speed too much. For ordering info, write: 1836 W. 51, Erie, PA 16509.

--JL

LE FRANCAIS DE ARROGANT

Here's a low budget effort with heavy industrial influences. You get to hear some real interesting samples. I can't recommend buying this tape for sonic inadequacies, but I'd like to check 'em out live. If they keep it up and get good overall production, we'll hear more from 'em in the future. For ordering info, write: Roman Recordings, 4306 East Dr, Wonder Lake, IL 60097.

--DV

PERSECUTION

Here's four songs with a hefty death grind sound, featuring a pretty solid rhythm section. They're a tight unit with definitive growl vocals. For ordering info, write: PO Box 2041, Hollywood, CA 90078-2041

--DV

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modern rock with good songs. "Yellow" is a heavy and passionate tune and the highlight here. Minneapolis has a whole slew of talented bands, and this is one of her good ones. For ordering info, write: 204 Second Ave NE, Buffalo, MN 55313.

--DV

CLASH OF SYMBOLS

The band name and album title from this California quartet sparks the interest; the principals involved provide the dough. Former head Altar Boy and solo artist Mike Stand lead the group that also former Allies bassist Matthew Chapman and newcomers _ (guitar) and _ (drums) through a seven-song, 31-minute EP of postpunk guitar rock. If that description sounds like the Altar Boys, you're on the right track, but Sunday perhaps kicks a little harder and is a bit edgier than *Forever Mercy*, the 'Boys' last studio offering.

The five standard

compositions(the closing two tracks are mainly rock instrumentals with repeated, short refrains) bring back the uniqueness of Stand's songwriting -- mainly upbeat and positive, never afraid of proclaiming God's name, and with an acute understanding of God's grace and the need for our daily commitments to His ways. "Give" and "This," the first two tracks, are perfect examples of how Stand encourages and challenges; "Surround Me" is a compelling cry out for grace in a restrictive world that recalls the 'Boys' earlier works.

The most satisfying musical moments on Sunday are also the most energetic. "Paint This Place" employs a low, driving rhythm with a guitar counter melody that leads into a catchy, anthemic chorus and "I Don't Hear the Question," which lament for the lack of critical thinkers in today's society, has a powerfully dynamic quality that climaxes

with an intense dual-guitar ending that features a standout solo. It's during this type of all-out rock that Stand's urgent vocals, as always, communicate the loudest and resonate the deepest. At his best, Mike Stand makes us feel it.

For ordering info, write: 777 South Main St, Suite 57-332, Orange CA 92668.

-BH

ETERNAL DESTINY

This band's music is really dated, but for some odd reason I enjoyed it. "I Love the Lord" is a great tune that definitely requires audience participation. I caught myself singing the song title long after the tape ended. "Hang In There" is a slightly softer tune, and "Why Go To Hell" is a barn burner tune. Good production is a real plus on this tape. If you enjoy the commercial metal/rock of the late eighties, here is some music that will bring back memories.

For ordering info, write: 594 Marcellus Rd, Williston Pk, NY 11596.

--JL

PREMONITION

Here is a band with a lot of potential. There's nothing real fancy on *Relic*, but what is here is some pretty good Metallica-style metal. I give it a thumbs up! To order, send \$5 to: 2091 N. Lovington, Apt. #201, Troy, MI 48083. (JL)

Several of these rare tapes and CD's (most especially the ones from overseas) can be found via mail-order (and at some summer festivals) from the following businesses: Rad Rocker's Emporium, PO Box 207, Milan, MI 48160; and True Tunes, 210 West Front Street, Wheaton, IL 60187. This is a great help for some of you, because it can be a hassle going to the bank to get an international money order in foreign currency (just ask our overseas subscribers when they want to buy something here!).

HM

Doug's Diary...

Seminar In The City

Chuck Sugar's "Seminar in the City," which you probably saw advertised in HM #49, was a roaring success. Besides the hotly contested "battle of the bands" competition, which was co-judged by a panel that included Ben Huggins (of Galactic Cowboys), producer Brian Garcia, and myself, there were some great teaching seminars. Performance specialist Tom Jackson did a killer job explaining how to be yourself, what record companies look for in an artist, and how to excel in live performance. This guy is an asset of the excellent variety to add to your training if you're an artist. The most joy I received though, besides the fajitas for lunch, was Kemper Crabb's seminars. His column in Heaven's Metal is definitely one of my favorite parts of the magazine, and his seminars were covering the same ground. I

remember hearing one guy in the audience utter a giant, "Whoa!" after Kemper made a point about many Christian songwriters wanting to become "Christian mediums" when asking God for a song, rather than taking the responsibility to work at the craft of song writing. It was amusing to hear somebody being blown away so much that they couldn't help but say, "Whoa!" out loud. Another comment that really impressed me was, "Preparation precedes ministry at its fullest." In fact, it convicted me to spend an extra hour going over my session on "Desires, Priorities, & Questions." Like his column, Kemper spent plenty of time zeroing in on the American lazy "quick fix" work ethic. He referred to a book called Made In America by Michael Scott Horton for further study on this observation.

Overall, it seemed a

very valuable seminar to take in as a young artist. There was definitely a treasure chest of wisdom to learn from in the professional songwriters, who taught classes and critiqued attendees' songs, and guys like Jackson and Crabb.

Promise Keepers

Heaven's Metal was recently at a "Promise Keepers" conference in Irving, Texas, where 45,000 men gathered in the Name of Jesus to commit themselves to being a real man -- a man of God. As many of you know, central to being a man of God is being a disciple of Christ -- following His teachings and obeying His Word. This is modeled for us in the New Testament by close-knit accountable relationships.

One movement, a phenomenon really, that is living this out on a practical and spectacular level is Promise Keepers. Thousands of men are gathering together in stadiums to worship together and be challenged to be men of integrity. They're also gathering by the hundreds of thousands in smaller groups on the local level. This is where the living out of the "seven promises" of a promise keeper takes place. These seven promises are:

- 1) To honor Jesus Christ through worship, prayer, and obedience to His Word in the power of the Holy Spirit.
- 2) To pursue vital relationships with a few other men, understanding that he needs brothers to help him keep his promises.
- 3) To practice spiritual, moral, ethical, and sexual purity.
- 4) To build strong marriages and families through love, protection, and biblical values.
- 5) To support the mission of his church by honoring and praying for his pastor and by actively giving his time and resources.
- 6) To develop meaningful relationships that reach beyond racial and denominational barriers

to demonstrate the power of biblical unity.

7) To influence his world, being obedient to the great commandment (Mark 12:30-31) and the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20).

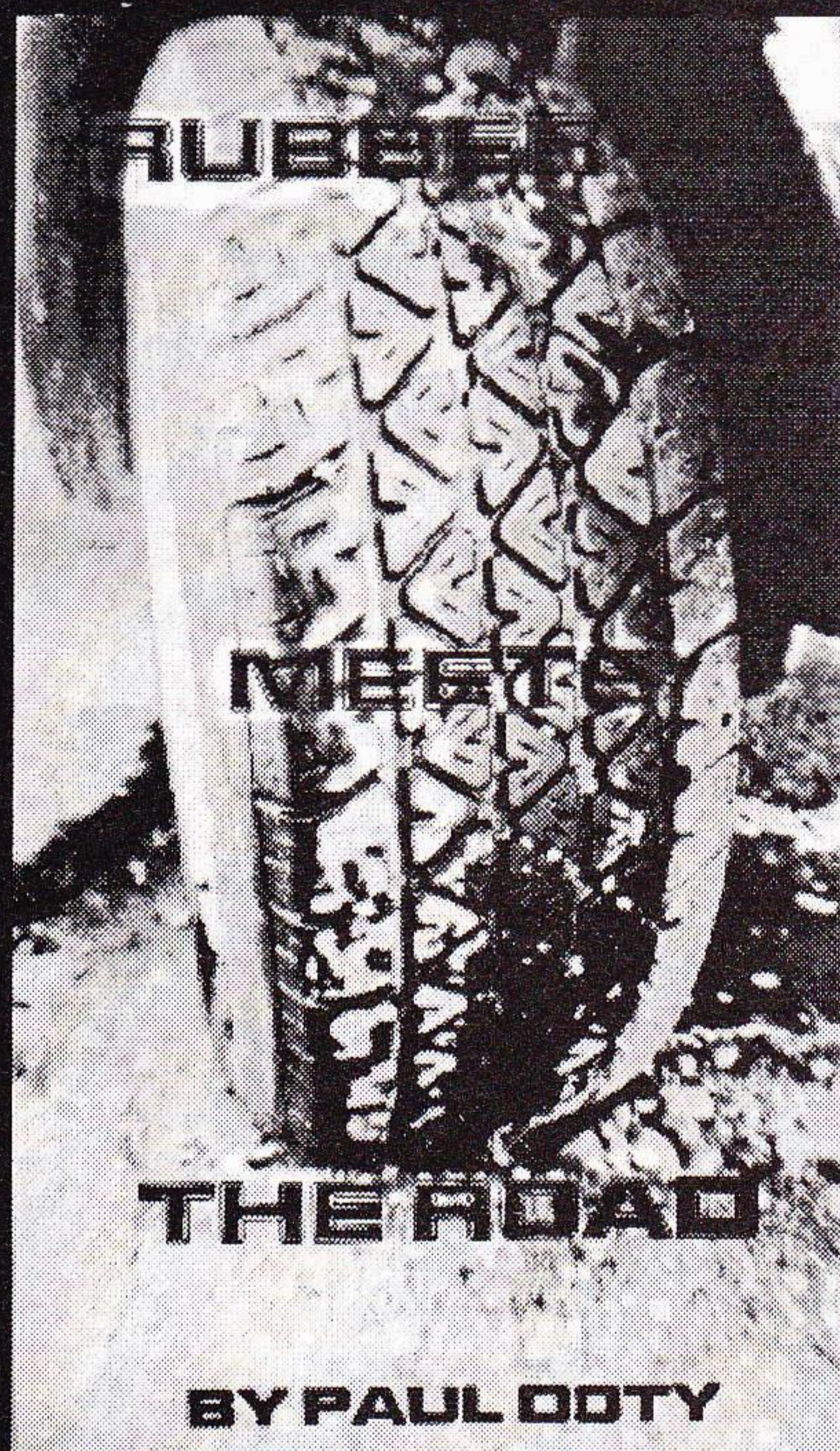
The impetus that started this organization is the humble admission of failure in all of these areas -- that we as Christian men have not been the example we need to be. While heavy metal and rock music perse are not represented from the stage at these events right now, President Randy Phillips expressed to me a desire to incorporate some different ingredients in order to reach and feed the younger men and teenagers of this nation for God. Irregardless of the presence of the coolest musical style or not, this movement is about something more important than music -- following Jesus and being men that try to live like Jesus.

Besides these life-changing "cheerleading sessions," where tens of thousands of men meet together for one or two days and come back home excited about it, the biggest difference is being made on the local level where believers meet together in small groups (usually less than 12 people per group) to flesh out the principles in God's Word. If all the subscribers of Heaven's Metal were involved in something like this, we'd sure be more equipped to be warriors in God's army!

The sites and dates for this year's meetings are as follows: Pontiac Silverdome (April 28-29); L.A. Coliseum (May 5-6); The Boise Pavilion (May 19-20); RFK Stadium (May 26-27); Astrodome (June 2-3); Mile High Stadium (June 16-17); Hoosier Dome (June 23-24); Georgia Dome (June 30-July 1); Seattle Kingdome (July 7-8); Metrodome (July 14-15); Thunder Dome (August 4-5); Oakland Coliseum (September 29-30); and Texas Stadium (October 27-28). **HM**

HM #52

MAKE YOUR MOM HAPPY...



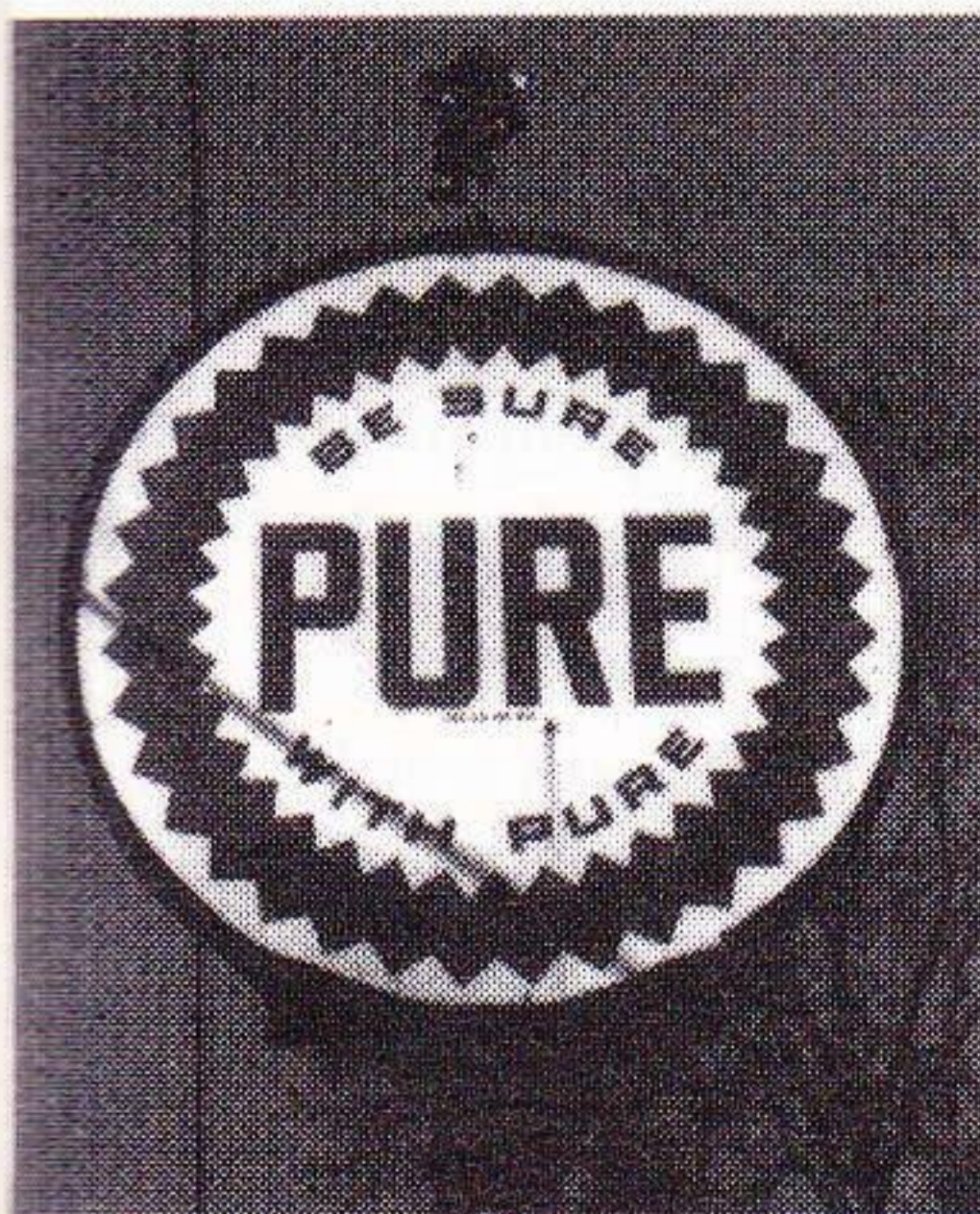
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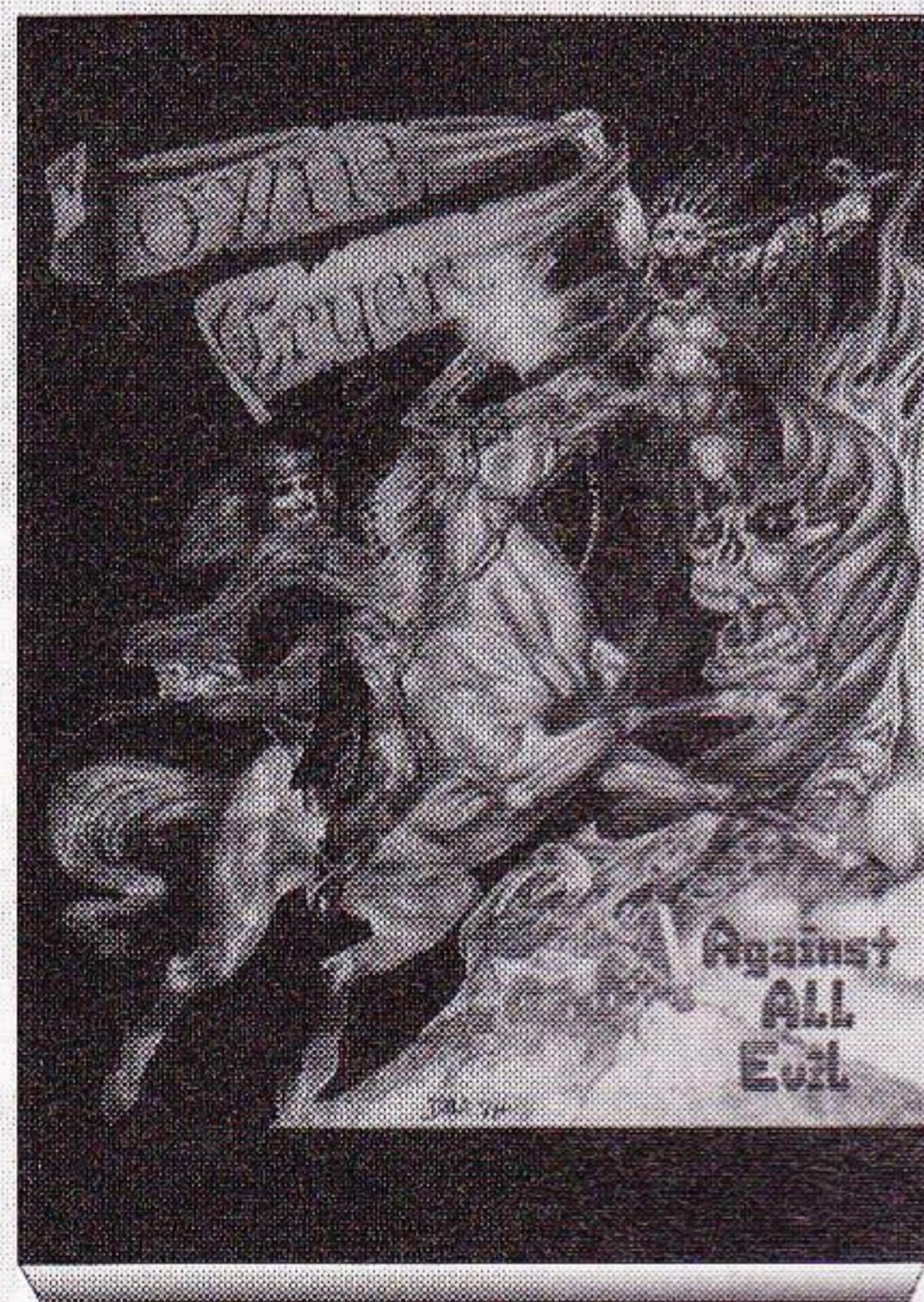


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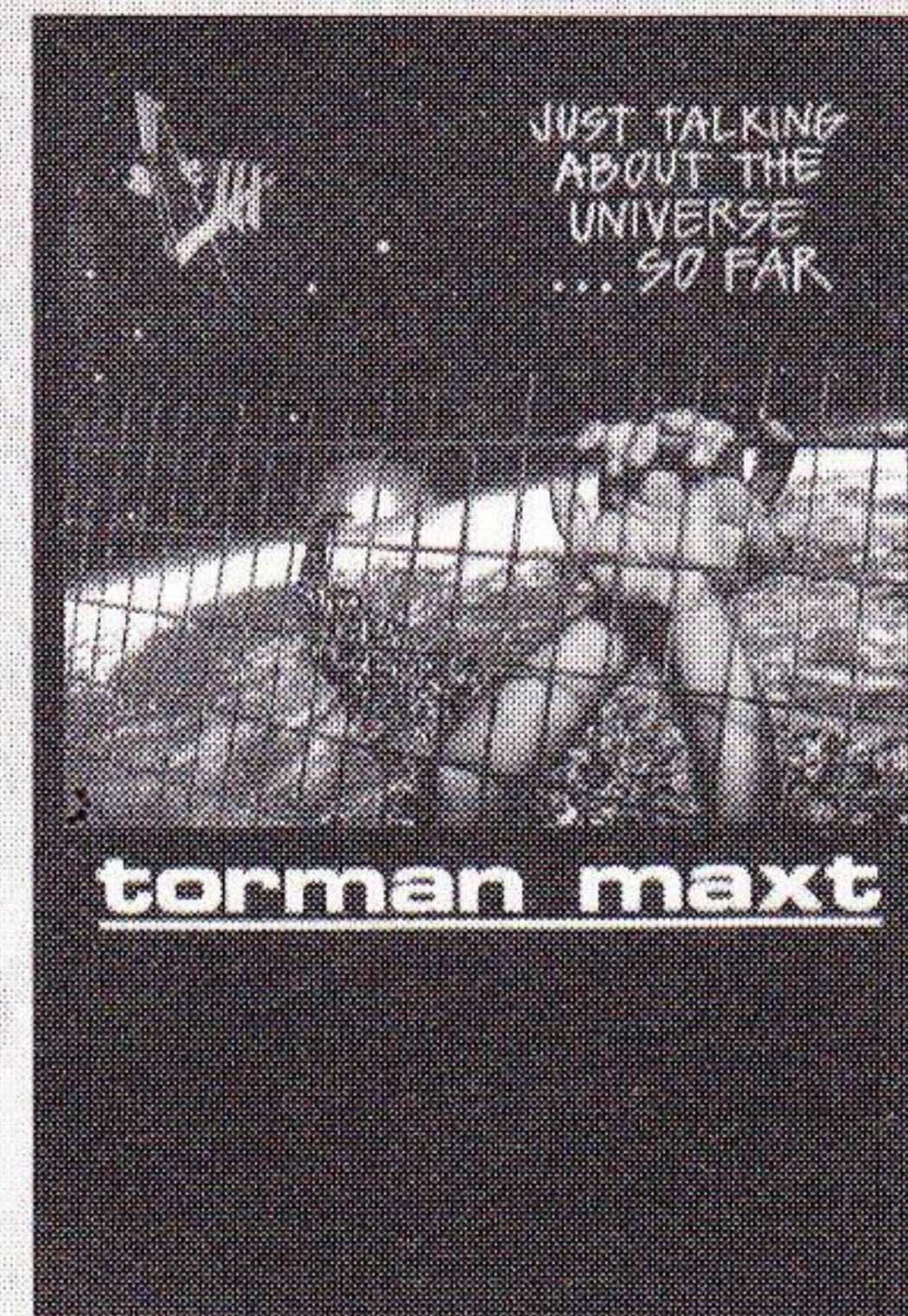
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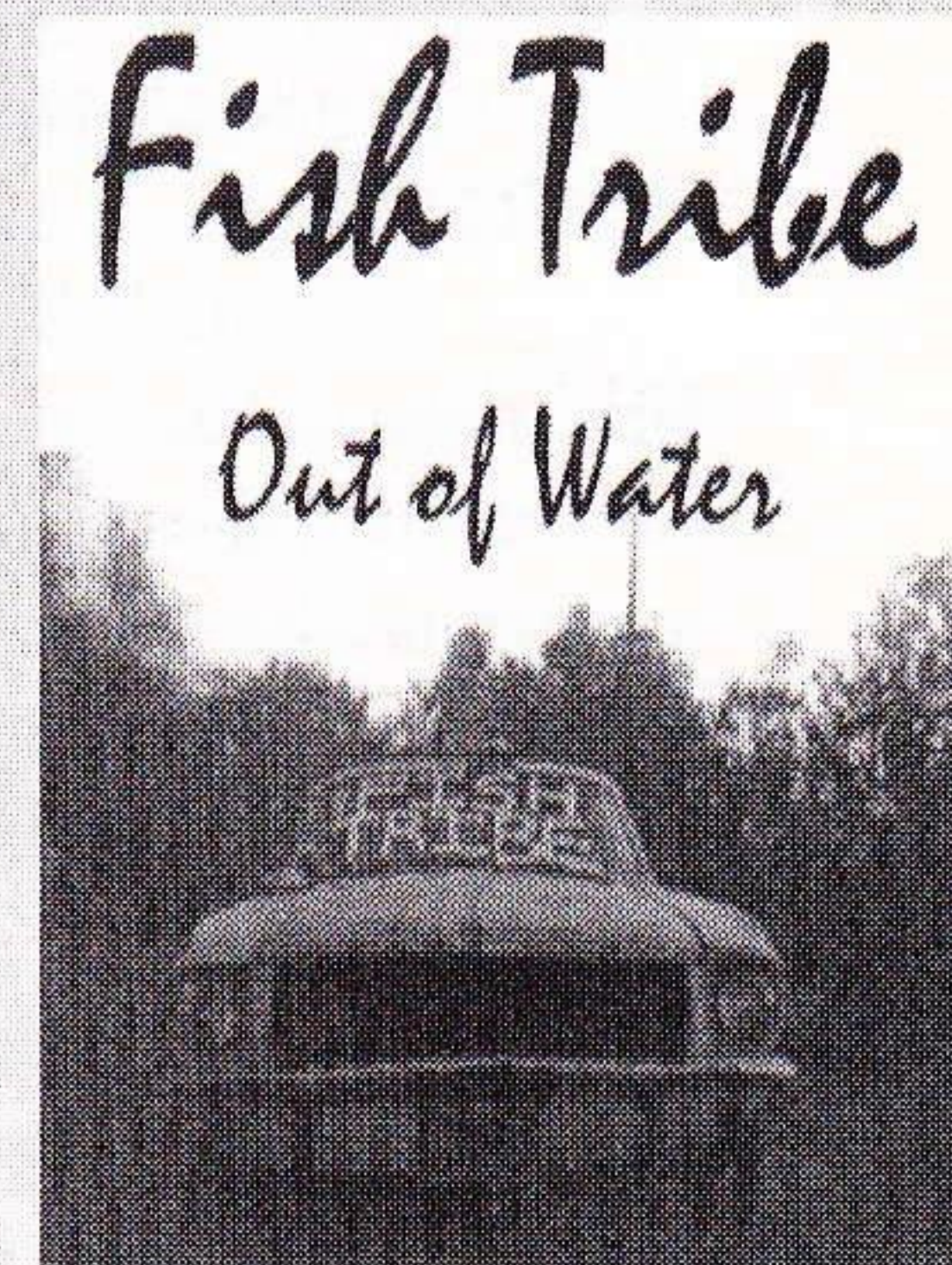
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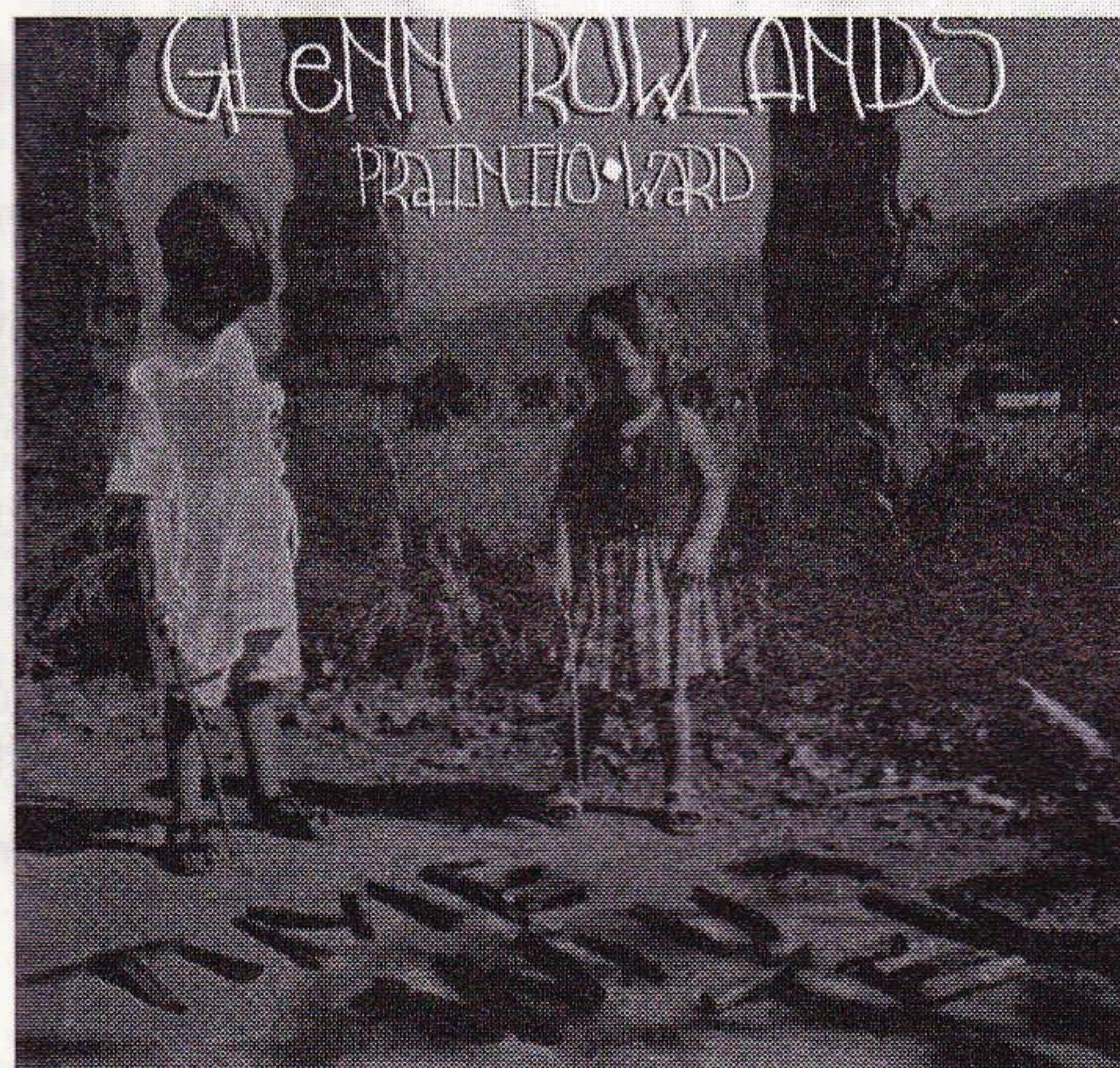
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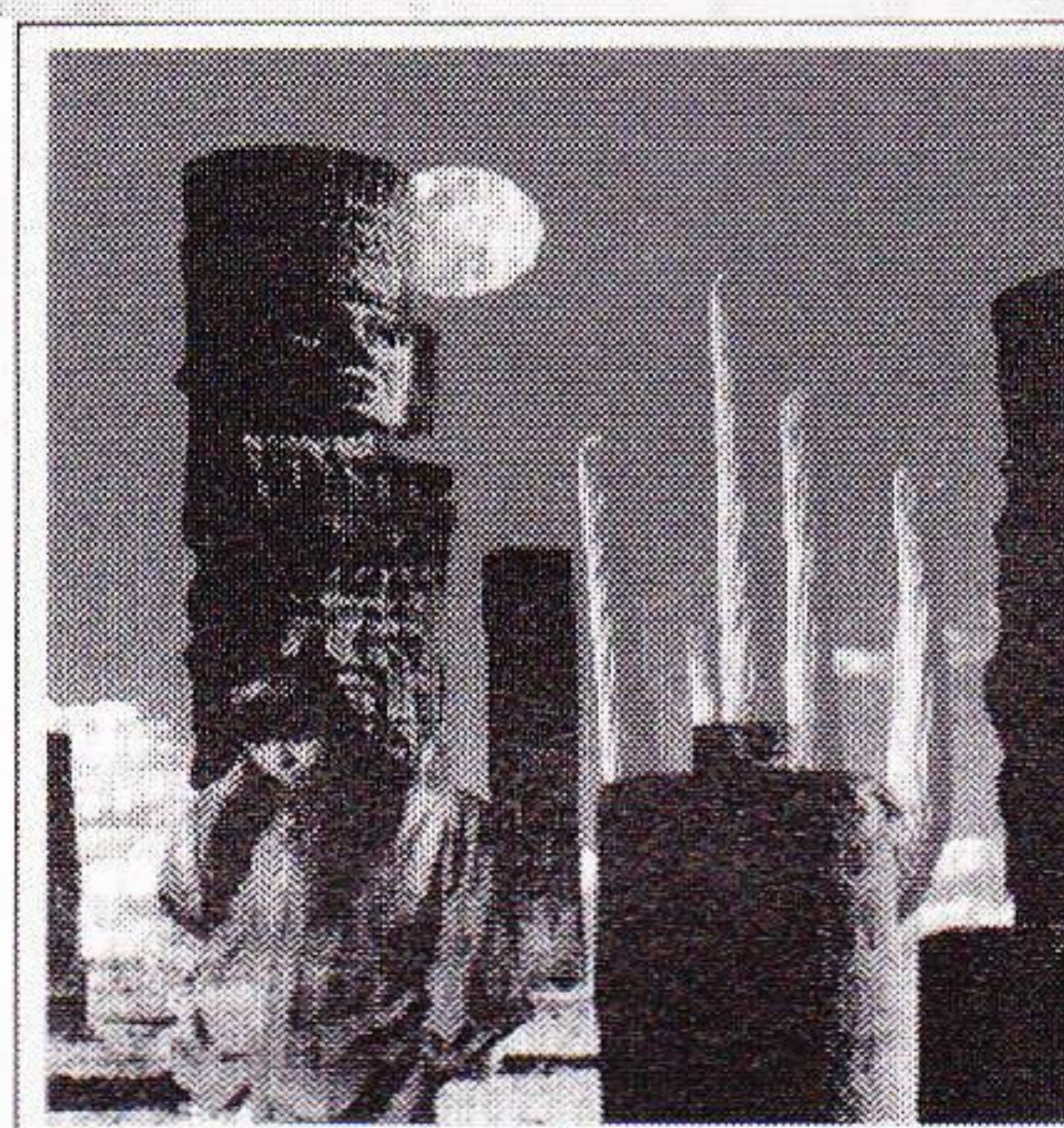
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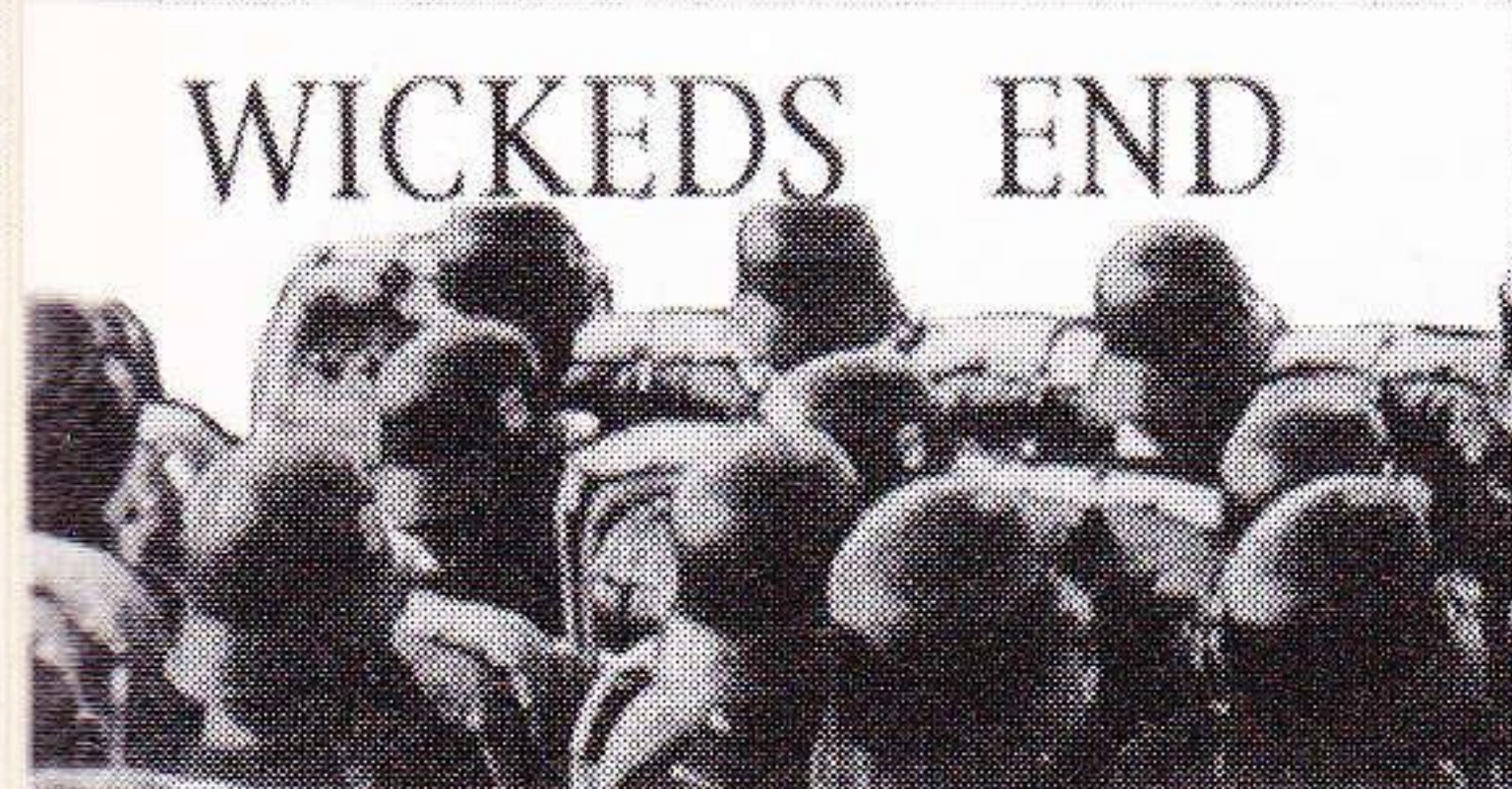


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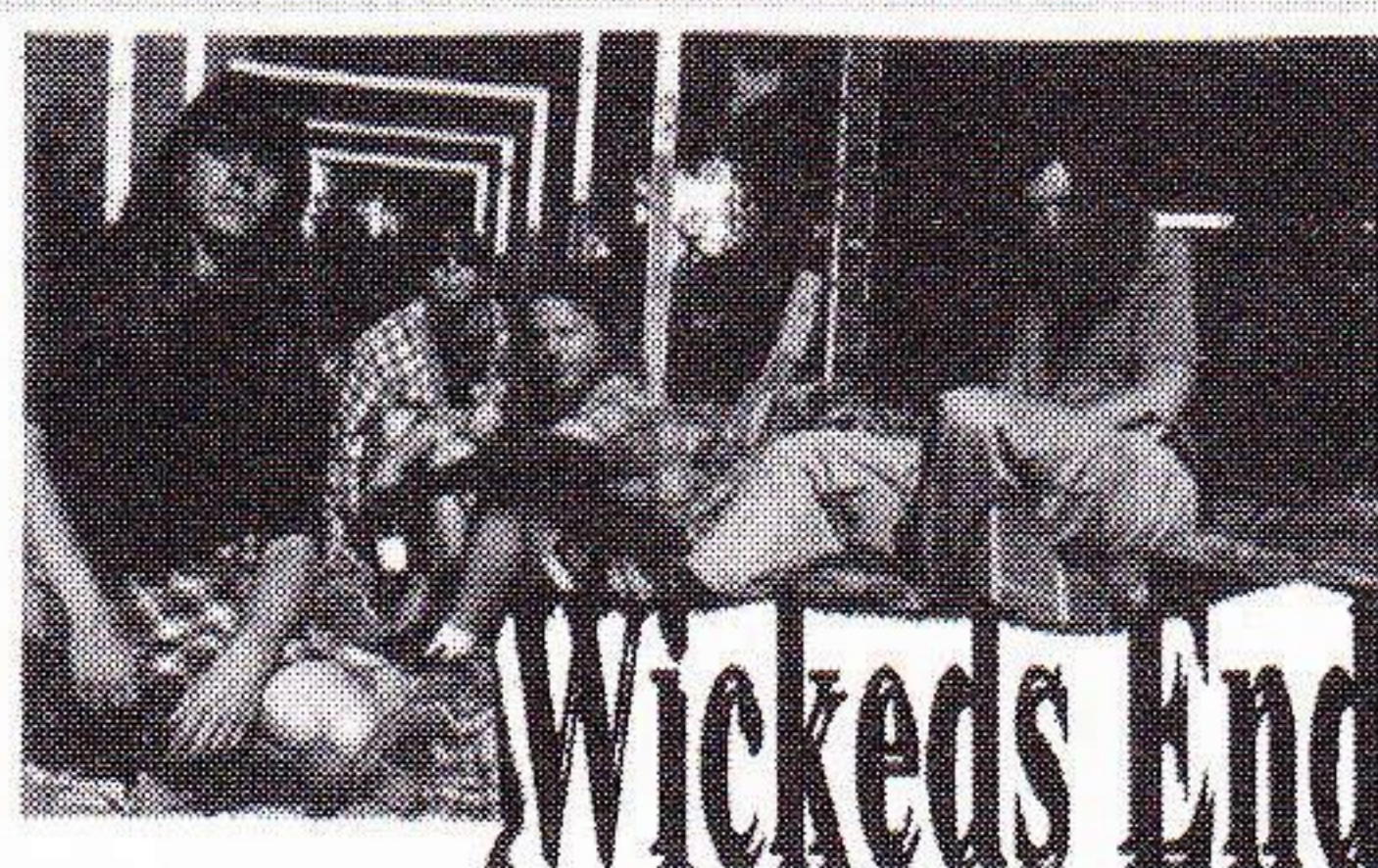
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* Each subscriber to Heaven's Metal has two Prayer Partners. We take the names directly above and below yours on the master subscription list, who have been designated to pray for you and vice-versa. Write in if you'd like their names and addresses. HM

Radio

- 1 "Internalize"
- Blenderhead
- 2 "You Can't Break Me"
- Precious Death
- 3 "Map"
- Deliverance
- 4 "Bearing Gruesome Cargo"
- Tourniquet
- 5 "Injudicial"
- Paramaecium
- 6 "Power of God"
- The Crucified
- 7 "Lie To Me"
- Under Midnight
- 8 "Place"
- Bride
- 9 "Crawl"
- Sometime Sunday
- 10 "Reactionary Fear"
- Crashdog
- 11 "Your Life"
- Mortification
- 12 "Time For Love"
- Barren Cross
- 13 "Struggle"
- Six Feet Deep
- 14 "Realize"
- MxPx
- 15 "Breathing Murder"

Rock / Metal Radio & Sales Charts

- 16 Living Sacrifice
- "Neverends"
- 17 Unashamed
- "Blue Skies"
- 18 Velocipede
- "Separation"
- 19 The Blamed
- "Token"
- Mend
- 20 "Colors"
- Mission of Mercy
- 21 "Blood"
- Red Sea
- 22 "No Apology"
- Believer
- 23 "Desire"
- Latter Reign
- 24 "Torque"
- Chatterbox
- 25 "Walkabout"
- The Blamed

This is a reprint of the "Loud" chart courtesy The Pure Rock Report, a long-time radio/industry "tip sheet" that covers industry news and radio charts every three weeks. For subscription info, write: Living Edge Communications, PO Box 27093, Columbus, OH 43227.

The reporting stations for this

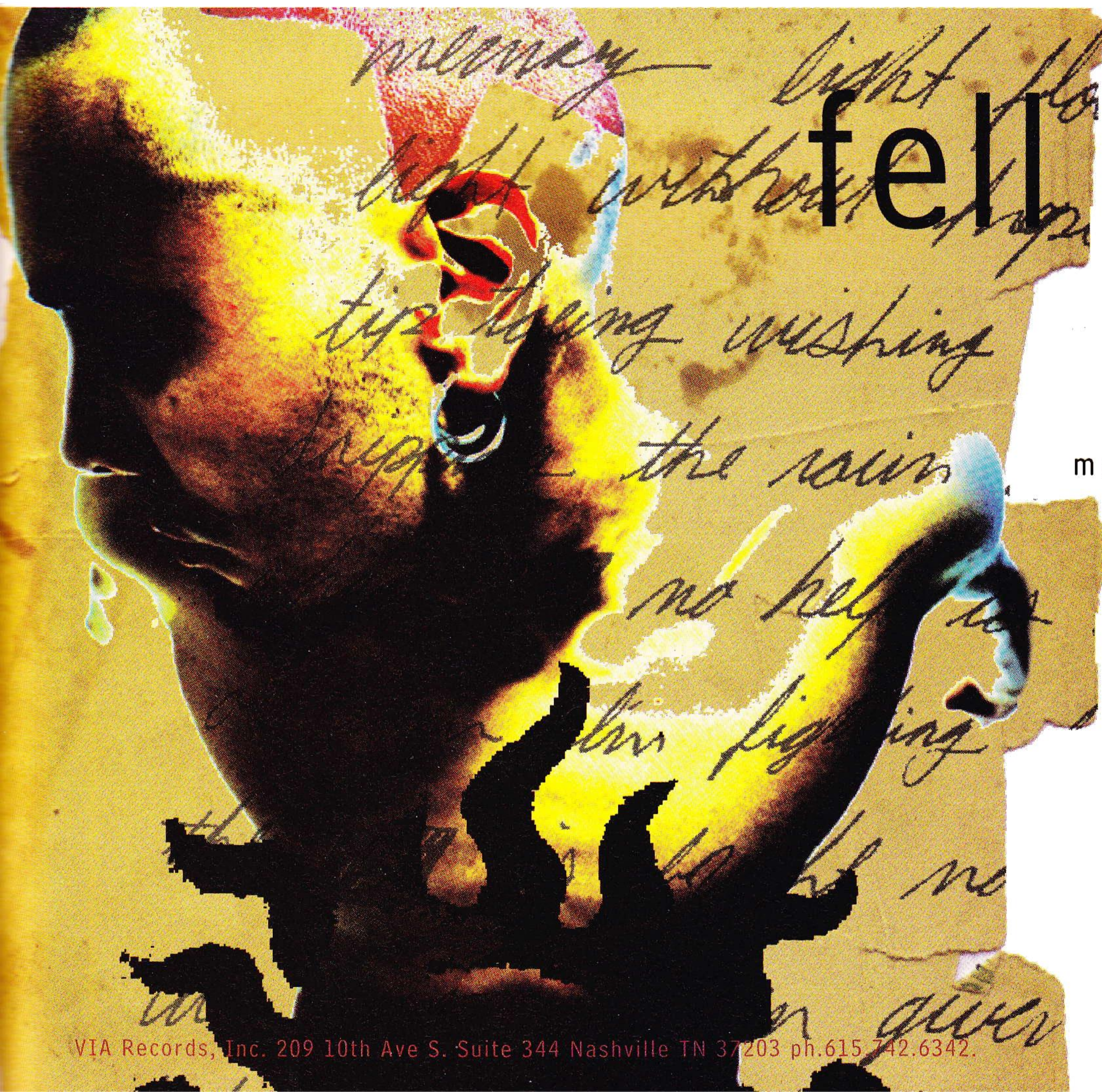
chart were: CFCR/Saskatoon, SASK; KCFS/Sioux Falls, SD; KCLC/St. Charles, MO; KLCJ/Amarillo, TX; KLYT/Albuquerque, NM; KOKF/Oklahoma City, OK; KSRQ/Grand Forks, MN; WEMC/Harrisonburg, VA; WITR/Rochester, NY; WMUL/Huntington, WV; WMVN/Ipshehming, MI; WQKD/Howe, IN; WTTU/Cookeville, TN; and WVOF/Bridgeport, CT.

Sales

- 1 Sin
- POOR OLD LU
- 2 Wake
- MORTAL
- 3 If You Must
- PRECIOUS DEATH
- 4 She's The Queen
- STARFLYER 59
- 5 Pokinatcha
- MxPx
- 6 Stone
- SOMETIME SUNDAY
- 7 Drowning With Land
- In Sight
- THE 77's
- 8 You
- THE KRY
- 9 Vanishing Lessons

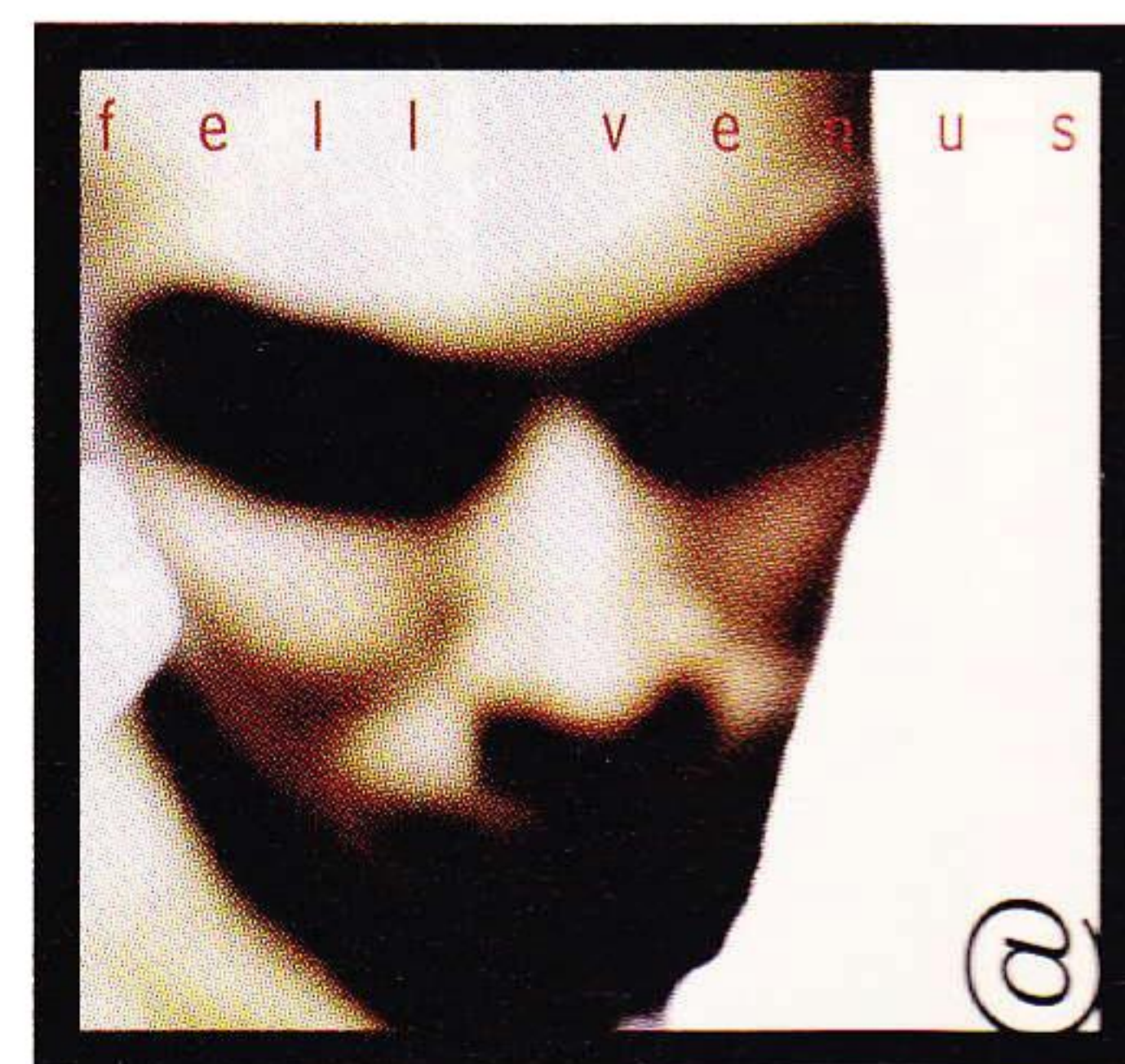
- 10 TOURNIQUET
- Swing Swang Swung
- GUARDIAN
- 11 Unveiled
- WHITECROSS
- 12 Welcome Race Fans
- DAKODA MOTOR CO.
- 13 Prime Candidate
- For Burnout
- BLENDERHEAD
- 14 Michael Sweet
- MICHAEL SWEET
- 15 River Disturbance
- DELIVERANCE
- 16 Grace Shaker
- L.S.U.
- 17 Silence
- UNASHAMED
- 18 Nothing But The Best
- WHITE HEART
- 19 Dirt
- MAGDALEN
- 20 Blood
- RED SEA

Reporting stores this report are: Loaves & Fishes, Vista CA; Ministries For Christ, Austin TX; True Tunes, Wheaton IL; New Life, Lynchburg VA; Living Vine, Columbia SC; and Christian Discount, Covina CA. HM



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music with edge, and more



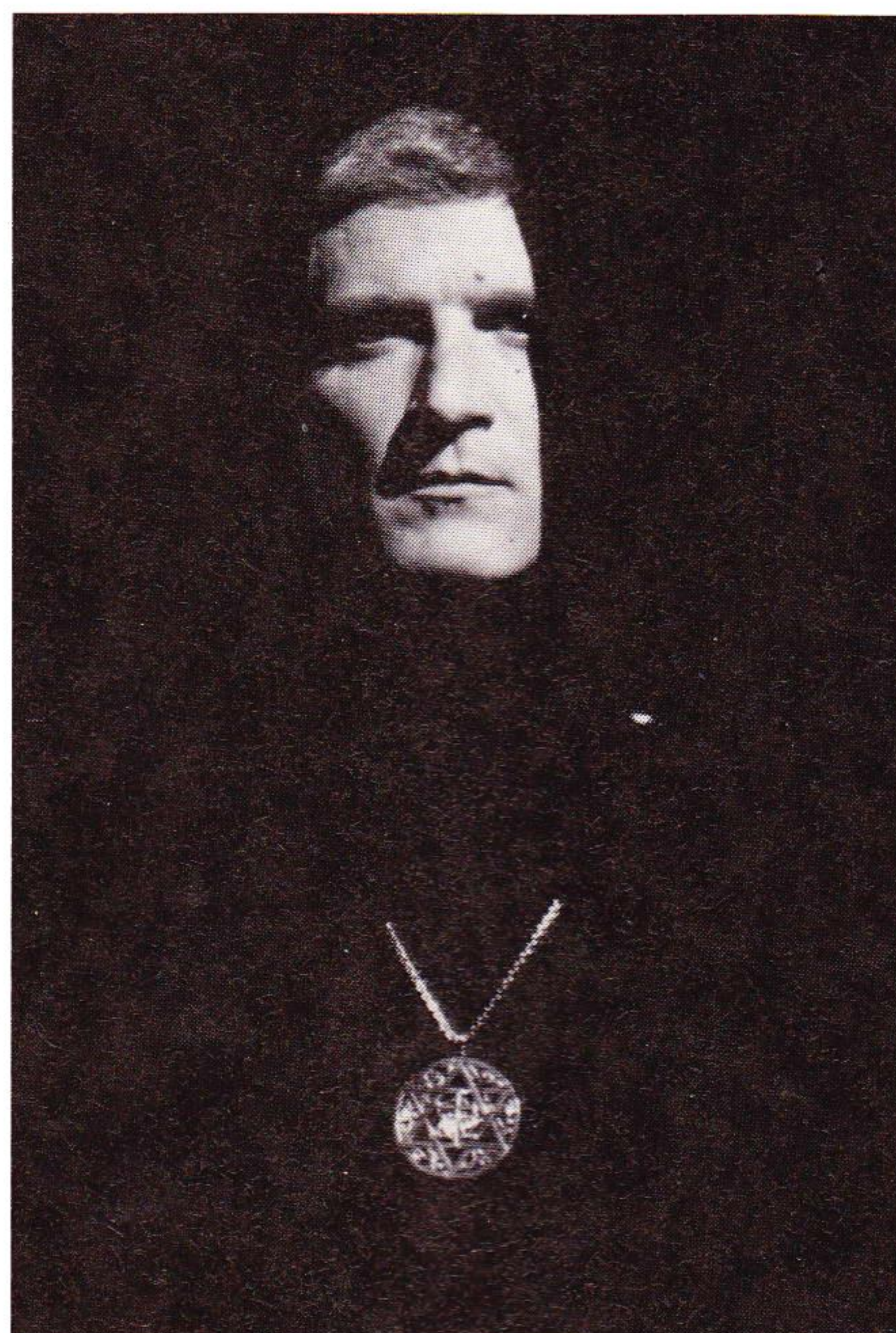
The Christian & Art

By Kemper Crabb

The Sons Of Issachar: Knowing What Israel Should Do Part V

In our continuing look at the model of the sons of Issachar in 1 Chronicles 12:32 and how that two-pronged example (understanding the times and knowing what Israel should do) applies to the artists of God's spiritual Israel, the Christian Church (Galatians 3:6-9; Ephesians 2:11-22; 3:6; etc.), we saw in the last column that "knowing what Israel should do" translates into the necessity of knowing Holy Scripture as completely as possible, since It is the Divine Blueprint for all of life (art included). We examined there the importance of a systematic, integrated approach to Biblical theology for a balanced doctrinal approach to help prepare us "for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16-17), including the good work of a calling to musical ministry.

Doctrine is, of course, vital to truly Biblical life and action. It is a truism among Evangelicals that doctrine is primarily presented in Scripture as what is called propositional Truth (I know this seems kind of dry and technical, y'all, but hang in there with me on this; because, although it is complex, it's also very important for Christian artists...). Propositional Truth is so called, because it presents propositions, or straight-ahead statements about the Truth it presents (e.g., "...the Word was God" [John 1:1] or "God is light [I



John 1:5]) and gives direct teaching (or didactic) commands (such as "Flee youthful lusts" [2 Timothy 2:22] and "Thou shalt do no murder" [Exodus 20:13]; etc.). Most Christian teaching these days centers on propositionally-presented Biblical teaching (which is, of course, vital to the Church's task).

Most Evangelicals would be surprised to realize, however, that the propositional presentation is not the only way that Truth is taught in the Bible. God has also arranged another mode of communicating His Truth that complements the propositional method: the Representational or Symbolic method.

God has structured Reality in such a way that symbols stand at its heart. What do I mean by this? Consider the following: Romans 1:18-22 teaches that God's Invisible Attributes are clearly manifest, seen and known in God's Creation; Psalms 19:1-4 teaches that the heavens themselves declare God's Glory to the ends of the earth; Genesis 1:26-27 says that man himself was made to bear God's Image.

Understand what this means -- God made all of Reality together, and each part of Reality separately, to reveal Himself. This is the primary and highest meaning of everything created: to reveal the Glory of the Creator God. Everything is a symbol of God, with man, the specific Image-bearer, as a special symbol of Himself.

The Fall has blinded us to God's Glory in Creation, so that we will not, in our sin, allow ourselves to recognize the Truths that are inescapable in all created things, including (and especially) ourselves (Genesis 3; Romans 1:18-32).

God through Christ has acted to save us from this spiritual death and blinders, bringing reconciliation and healing of vision by the Holy Spirit's re-birth of those who turn in repentance and faith to Jesus (John 3:1-21; 1:1-17).

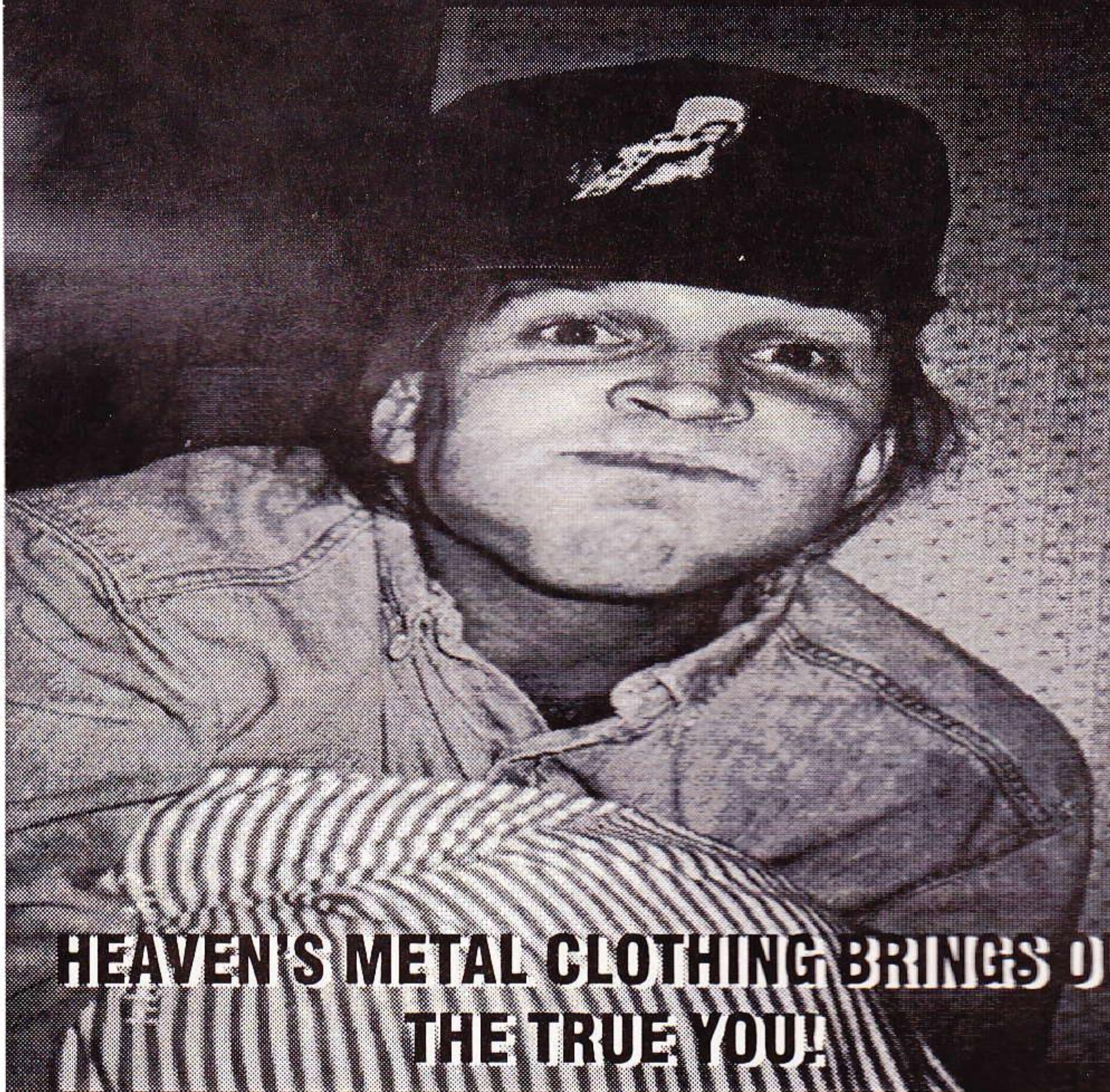
In this rebirth, men began to be able to see God's Glory in Creation again, and the Bible acts as a corrective lens for us to look through and see Him in all of Reality, His Symbol of Himself. The reborn man also begins to learn by His Scripture -- corrected vision how to help others see the Glory at the Heart of Reality (a primary task of every Christian artist).

Next issue, we will (God willing) explore the importance of symbols to the artistic calling, and to knowing what Israel should do. Selah!

You can receive Kemper's newsletter and/or order *Vigil*/Arkangel/Radiohalo product by writing to: PO Box 840501, Houston TX 77284-0501.
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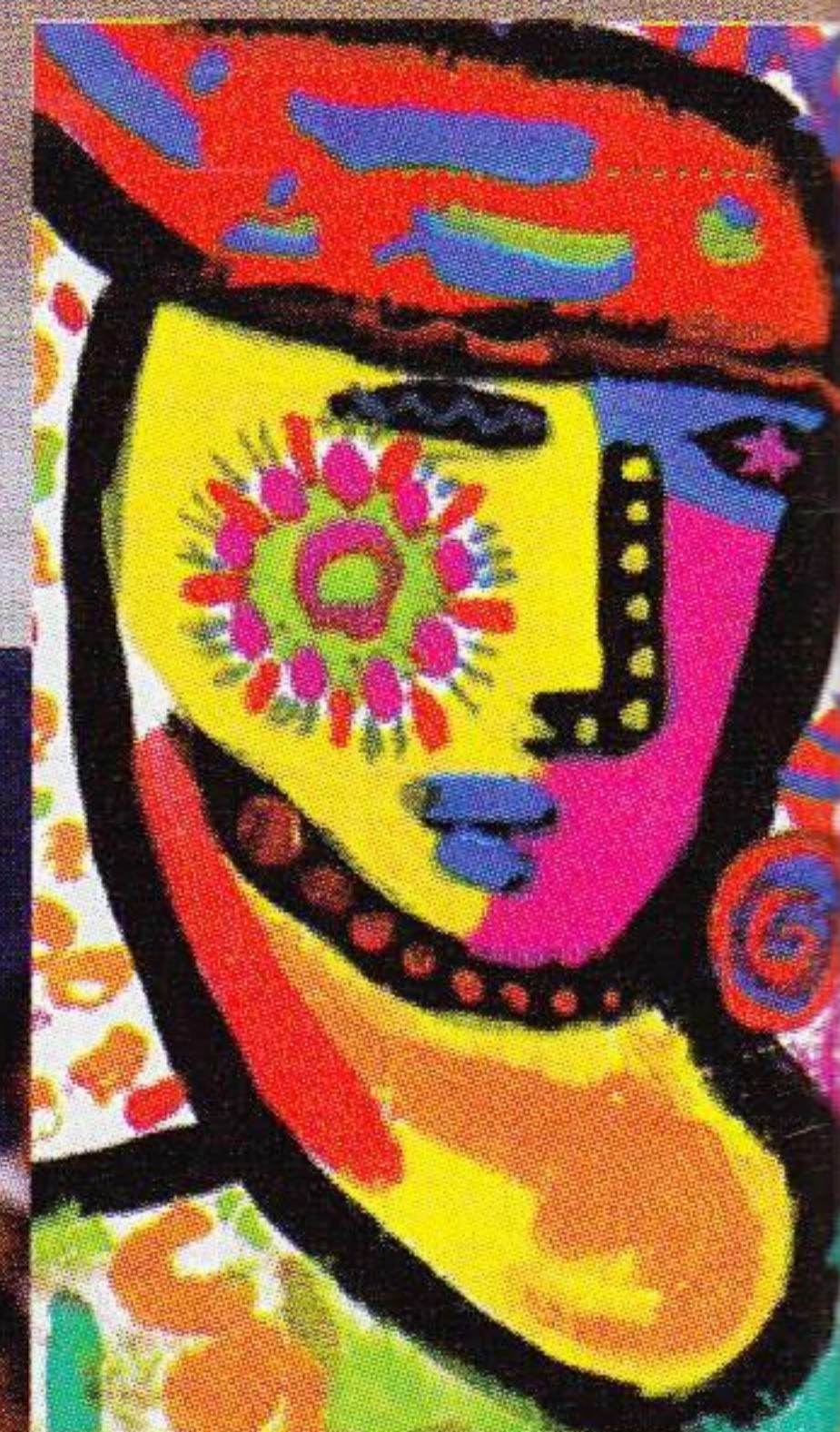
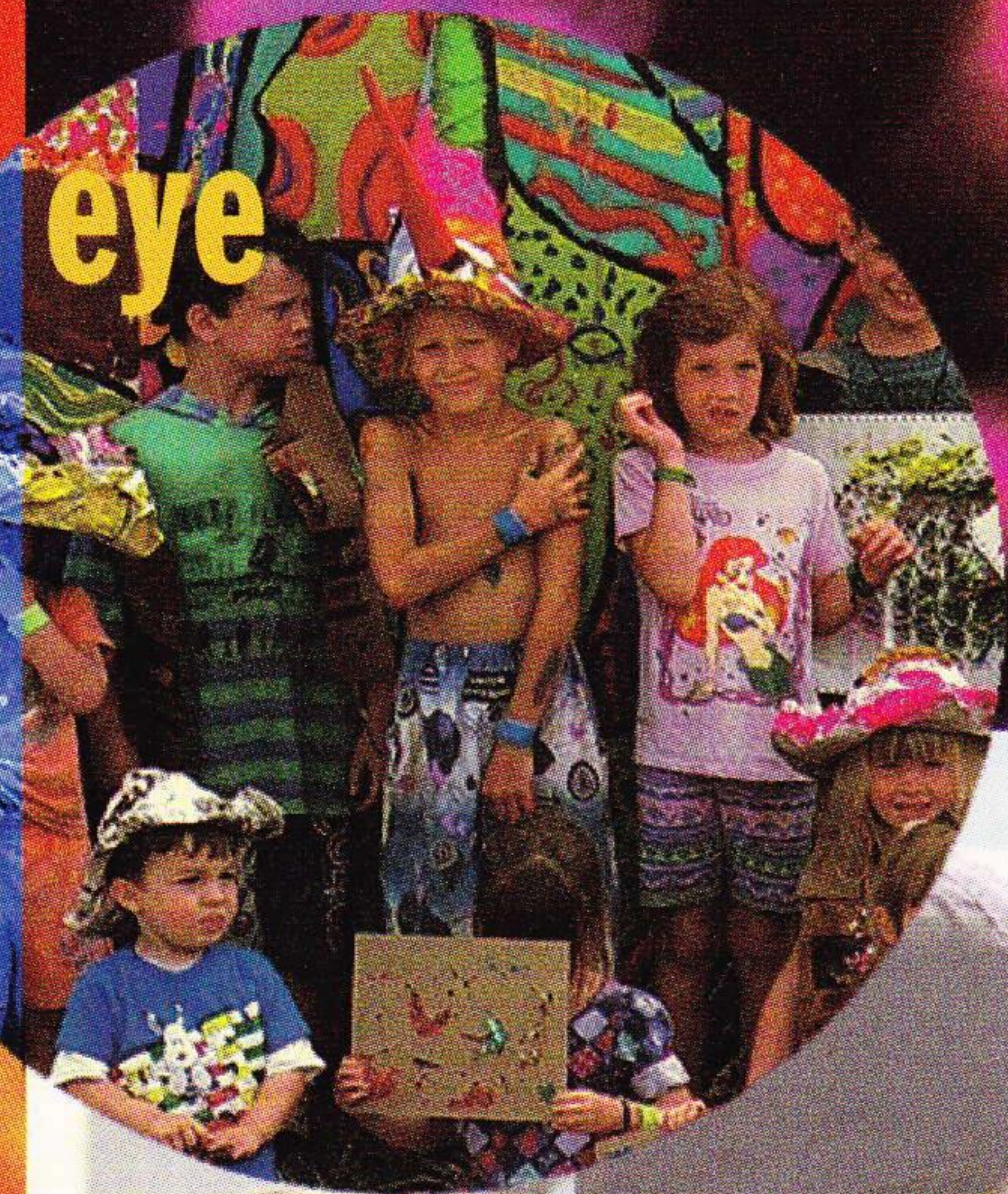
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CORNERSTONE '96

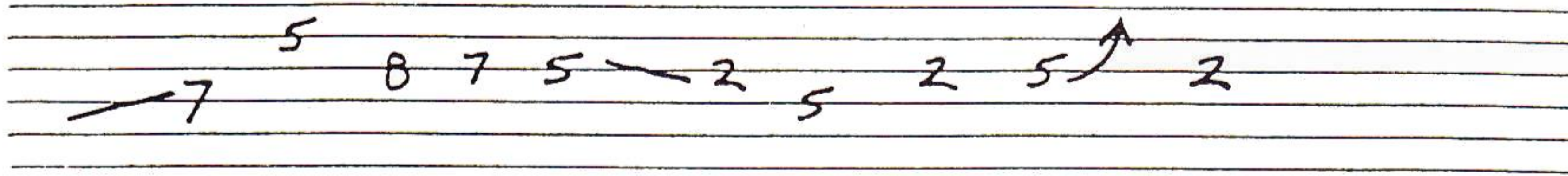
CHARLIE PEACOCK
GEOFF MOORE & THE DISTANCE
PHIL KEAGGY & BAND
STEVE TAYLOR
REZ UNPLUGGED
PFR
ADAM AGAIN
LOST DOGS
AT THE FOOT OF THE CROSS
GLENN KAISER
VECTOR
JIMMY A
POOR OLD LU
CIRCLE OF DUST
SIXPENCE NONE THE RICHER
CRASHDOG
THE CROSSING
CAUZIN' EFEKT
FLEMING & JOHN
GREG & REBECCA SPARKS
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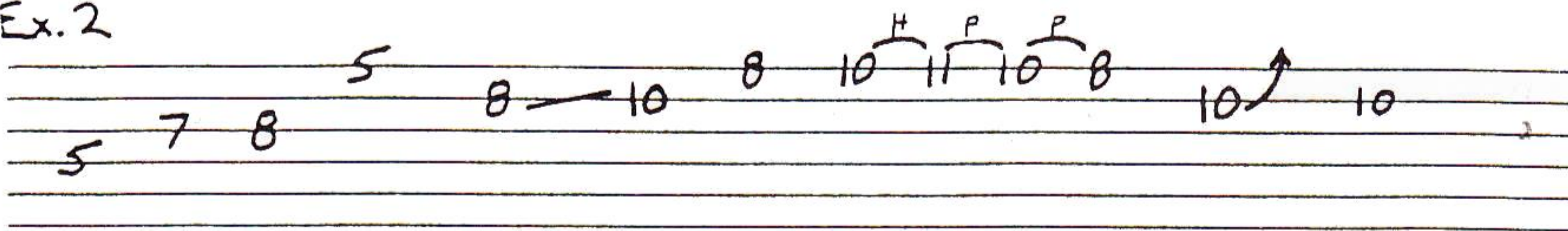
LICKS & TRICKS

BY JEFF SCHEETZ

Ex. 1



Ex. 2



This time we are going to take a look at a couple of licks that I've used to "spice up" a minor pentatonic scale. Both of these can be used over an A-minor chord progression. The reason I said they both had some "spice up" qualities, is that they both contain the flat 5 note (from the blues scale), and they both have a string skip in the lick.

The flat 5 is a standard addition to the minor pentatonic scale. This is commonly referred to as the Blues scale.

Work these out and get them up to speed, and then try to come up with similar ideas for your own solos. I always

say this, but it still is true: you can add a lot to your playing by just building on what you already know. Shore up your foundations! That is just like your walk as a Christian -- Jesus made it perfectly clear that, while we should always be seeking, we still need to have our house in order. Rather than constantly trying to make leaps and bounds, take a look at where you are now and see what you can do to make your personal bond with Christ a little more solid. It is usually the little things you do that will give you the greatest rewards!

This lesson is an excerpt from Jeff's new book & CD series -- The Jeff



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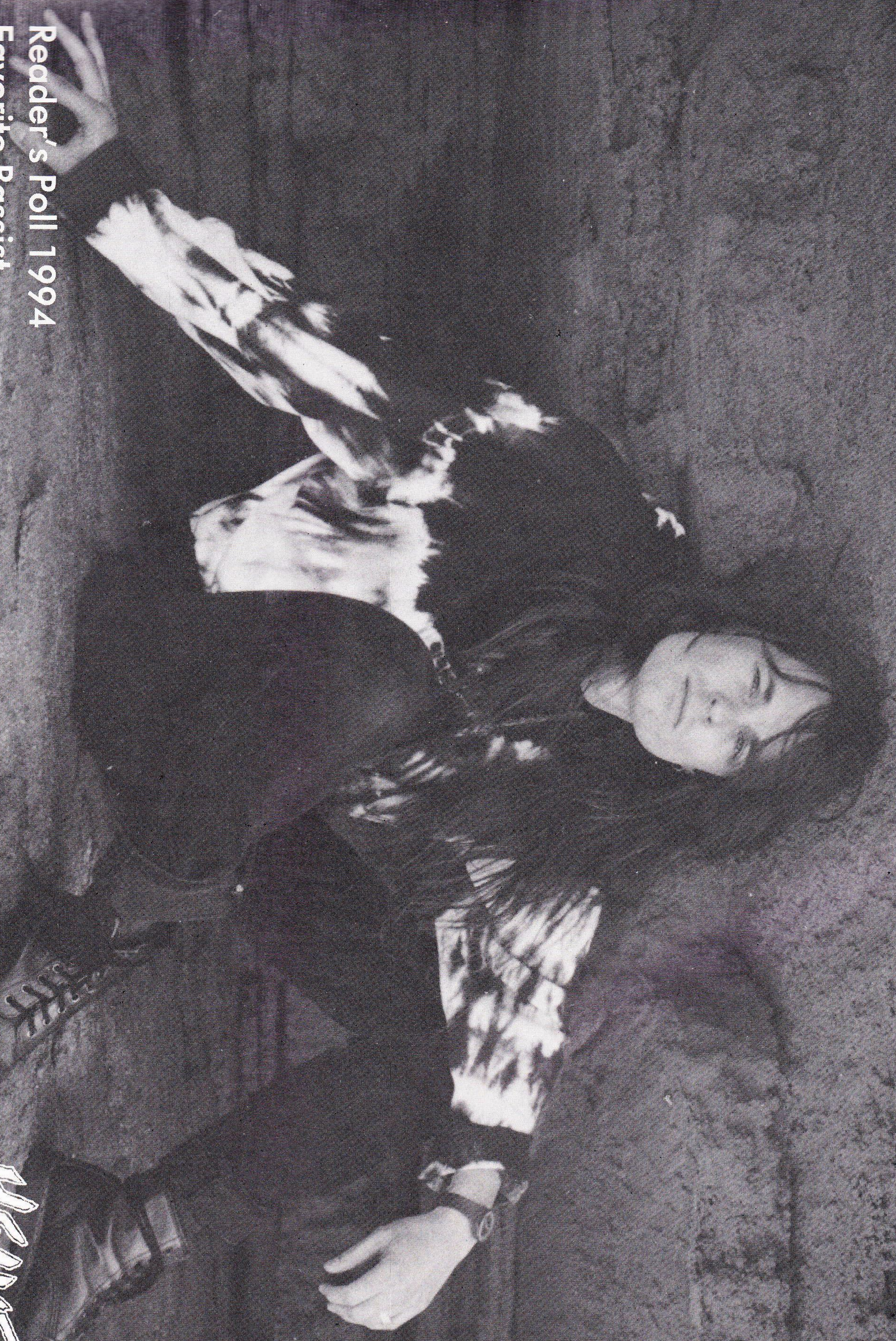
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Reader's Poll 1994
Favorite Bassist
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Gary & Ted with their Heroes

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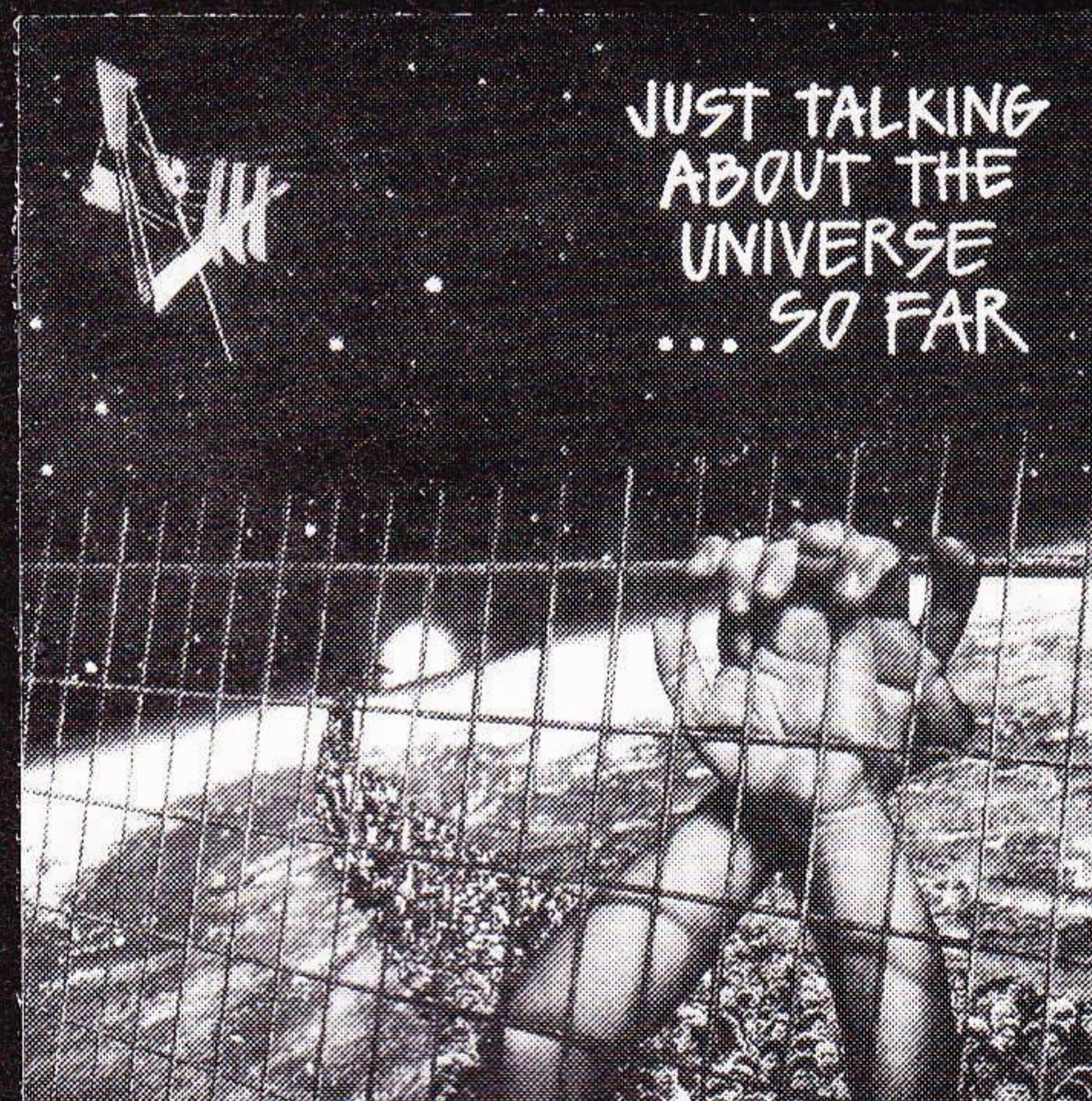
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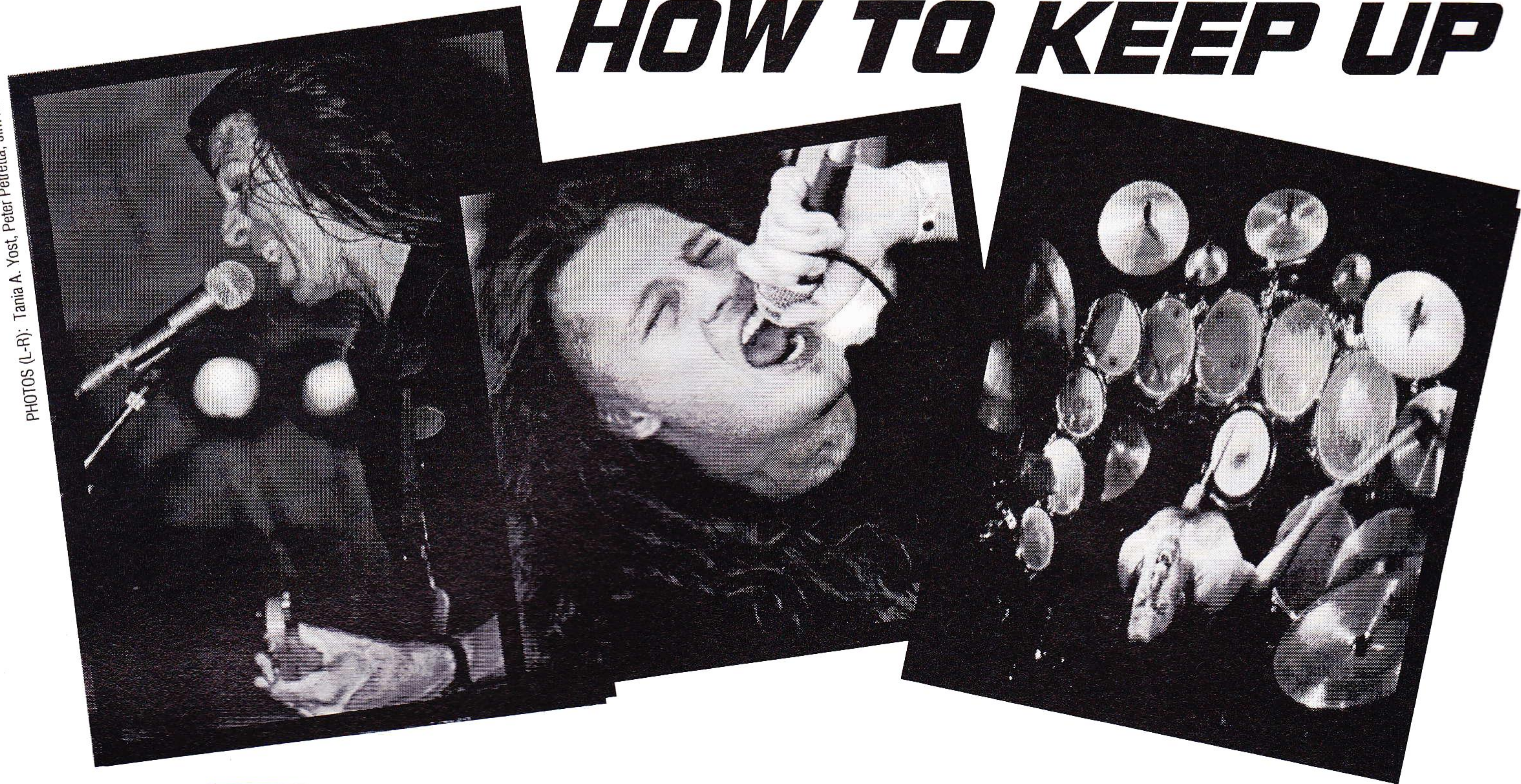


HEAVEN'S METAL

Reader's Poll 1994
Favorite Singer
Dale Thompson

WHEN THE MUSIC GETS THIS FURIOUS, YOU BETTER KNOW HOW TO KEEP UP

PHOTOS (L-R): Tania A. Yost, Peter Petretta, Jim Mull



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Can I hear a testimony?

The year was 1978. A new band called "Resurrection Band" had just released their first album, titled *Awaiting Your Reply*. I was so excited! Finally, some Christian music that I enjoyed! I couldn't wait to play the album for all my friends! To this day, I don't think there has been an album I have listened to more. I still have every breath on the album memorized!

It was then that I started using my music as a ministry. I remember, that same year, I rented some space on the midway at the state fair. I blasted Rez Band for all to hear! I had secured a stock of Rez Band albums from the local Christian bookstore and sold a lot of those albums that year. Everyone really liked the music! To this day, I still wonder how many of those people knew they were buying a Christian album!

I've been involved in Christian music ministry now for over 20 years. I get a little frustrated when I hear people insist that Christian rock music is "of the devil." There are still many that judge the work of the Lord according to their own personal tastes. The Bible tells us to judge according to the fruit it produces.

I won't tell you that every Christian band has had good fruit. That wouldn't be true. There have been many bands that should never have been in the ministry in the first place. But then, there have been others who have really helped to shape a whole new generation of Christians -- who are about to carry the torch and continue to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ.

It is important to understand that Christian rock music has never saved anyone! In John 6:44, Jesus told us: "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent Me draws him..." It is God Who does the work of drawing and changing someone's heart. But I will say that the ministry through Christian rock music has definitely challenged thousands of people

Pastor Bob



Photo by Sandra Mayumik

with the message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

I asked four people in our Bible School to comment on the role Christian rock had in their conversion. Here is what they said:

Johnny Williams: "It was 1988. My mom was watching TBN, and *Real Videos* came on. I happened to catch a Mylon LeFevre video, and it sparked my interest. Then a Stryper video came on, and I liked it, too!

"A couple of weeks after that, I met a guy who was into a few Christian bands. We talked about what I had seen on *Real Videos*, and he told me he had some other bands that were more of the style I listened to: Rez, Steve Taylor, Crucified, etc. That really hooked my interest. I ended up going to church with him and became a Christian. I continued to listen to bands like The Crucified and Vengeance. In fact, through the Scripture references on the Vengeance album, I began to read my Bible."

Roy Culver: "In the summer of 1989, a friend of mine let me borrow a Whitecross tape. A song on the tape really caught my attention. The chorus went something like, 'My blood has cleansed you, and your sins are remembered no more. Come on, walk with Me.' I found myself listening to the song over and over again.

"Later that summer, my friend invited me to come to a music festival with her church. I really enjoyed hanging around those people! They reached out to me and invited me to come to church with

them. It was later that year that I asked Jesus to forgive me for my sins and come into my life. Christian music still plays a large part in my life. I still see it doing the same in others' lives that it has done in mine!"

Sherry Arnold: "I used to be the heavy metal kid in my school. I did everything -- from knowing everything about my favorite bands to dressing like and attempting to live the lifestyle of a 'rock star.'

"It was through my love of music that a friend got me to listen to bands like Barren Cross, Holy Soldier, and King's X. I'd already heard of Stryper and liked their music. But these other bands were being so out-front with their music. It got me to thinking. Even though I'd been raised in the church, it wasn't real to me. Then I saw people who were like me, who really believed and were able to tell me the truth in ways that I could understand.

"It's amazing to see how God uses people, places, and little things (like the music we listen to) as tools to draw others to Him."

John Watts: "The influence of Christian metal really accelerated my spiritual growth. I was your average Christian 'pew-warmer.' I didn't even know Christian metal existed -- other than Stryper and Petra -- but I liked heavier stuff. Then I was introduced to Vengeance Rising, Mortification, Deliverance, and Living Sacrifice. I started to read the lyrics of my secular music and compared it to that of the Christian bands. I realized how much my secular music was shaping my mind. I really caught on to Christian metal -- even to the point of having my own Christian metal program on the radio.

"My life has really been changed. If I had never found Christian metal, I might have stayed in that complacent rut. It really intensified my walk with Christ."

God continues to draw people's hearts today. Don't forget about the ministry of those Christian rock tapes sitting on your stereo. You may have a friend right now who needs to borrow some of them!

If you have any comments or questions, I'd love to hear from you! Write to me at: Pastor Bob's Column, c/o Sanctuary, PO Box 23945, Nashville, TN 37202-3945. Need to talk? Call us at 1 (800) 548-5222.

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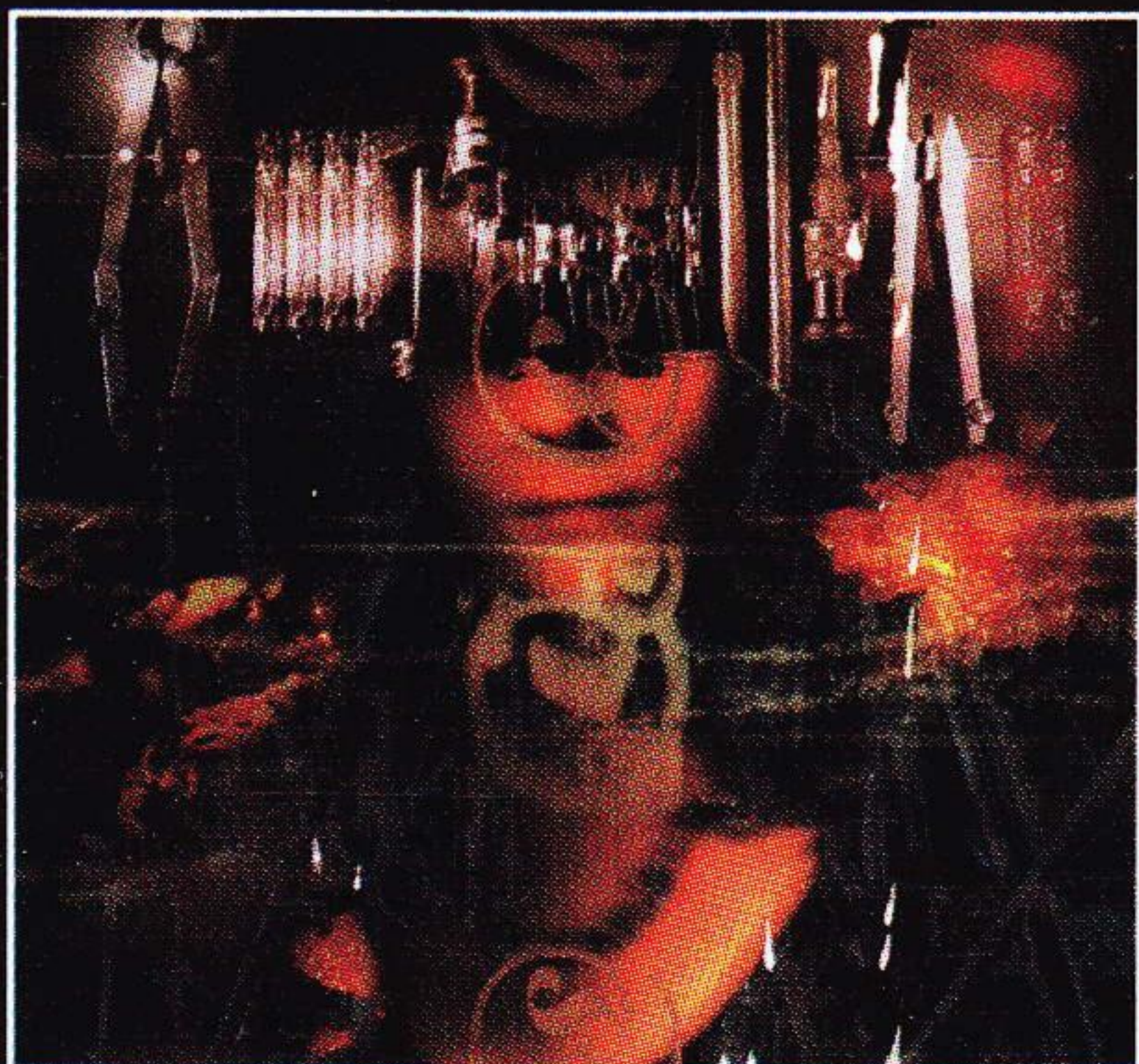
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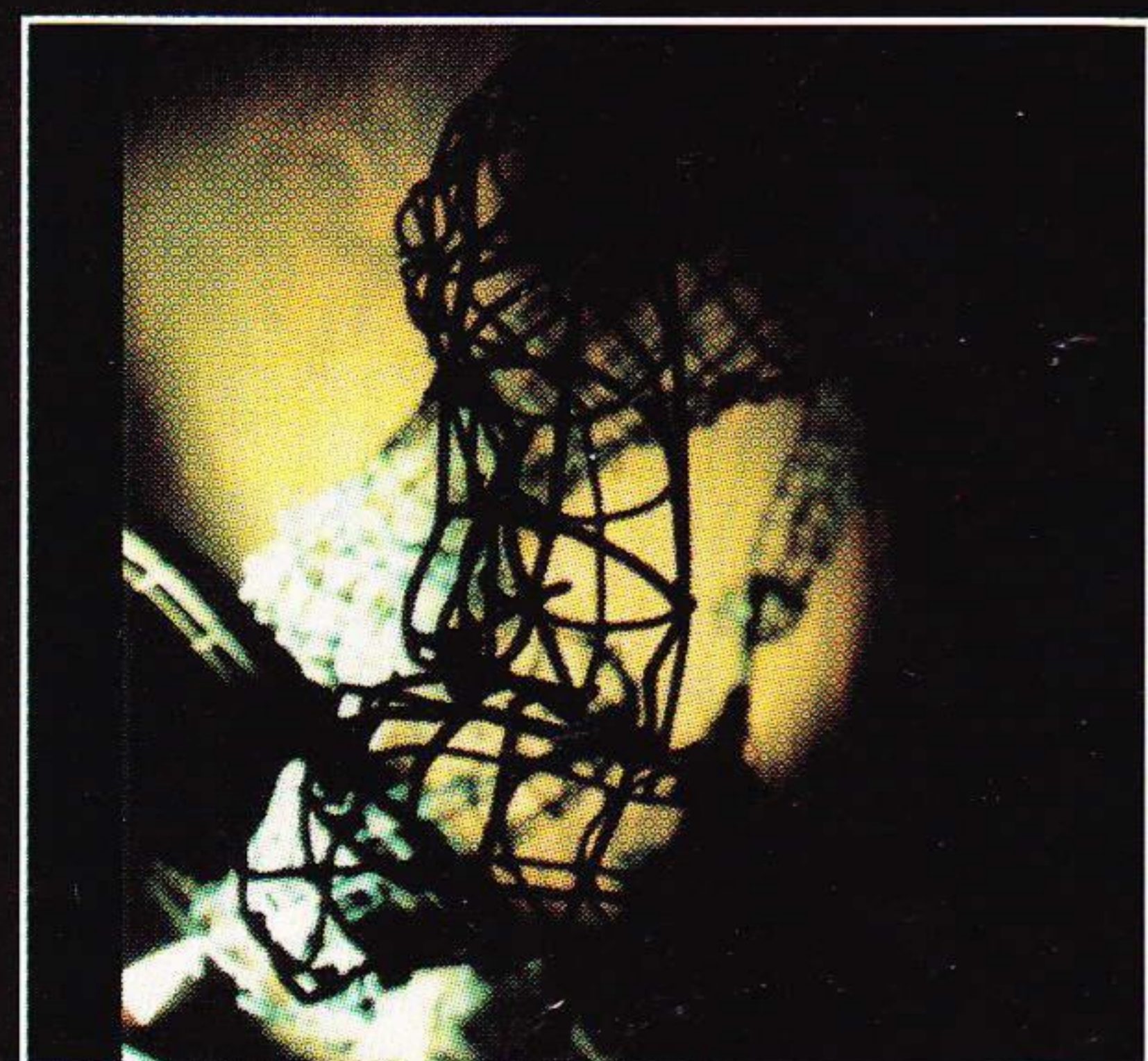
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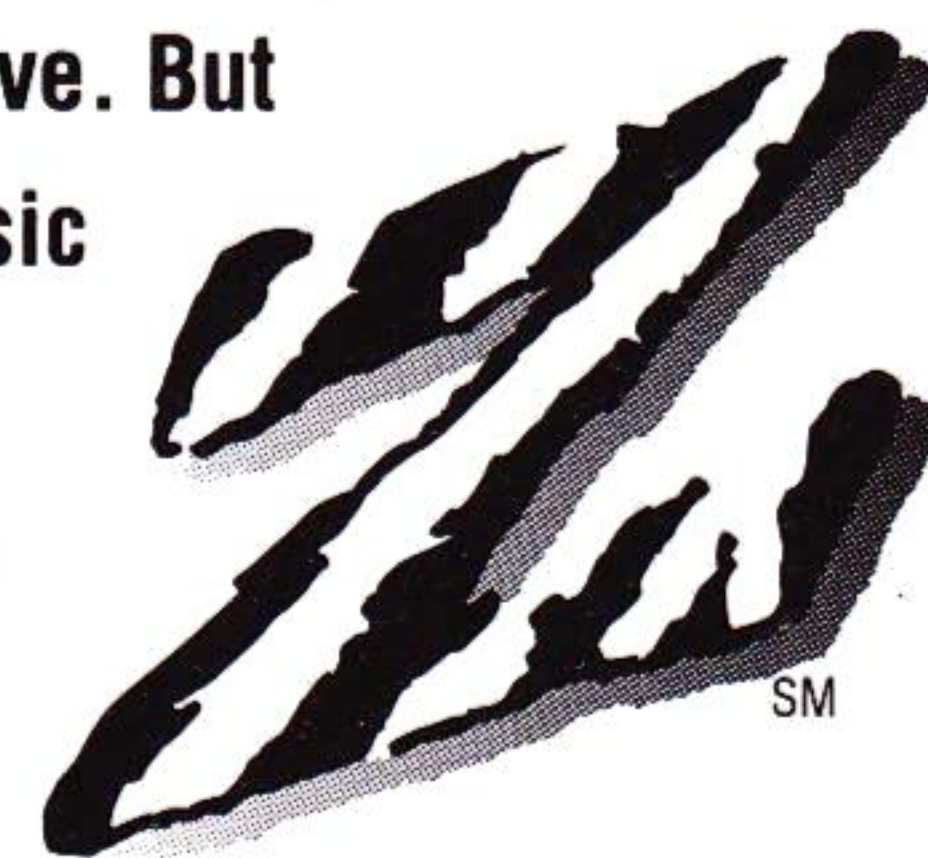


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Like children that crave those sugary-sweet gumballs, we all have our desires that we want fulfilled. While some of these desires might be good things that a loving God would like to give His children, they might also be the things that keep our focus from where it needs to be.

God is not a divine gumball machine that we put our token prayers in to get what we want. Just think for a moment about your concept of God. Does He exist simply to meet your needs, or is He a completely higher being that rules the universe and deserves to be followed?

As humans, we naturally tend to be selfish and man-centered.

God calls us to look beyond ourselves and be obedient to Him.

God is our Creator. He gave us the very breath that we breathe.

We owe Him our lives. When Jesus began His ministry on earth, He called men to deny themselves, pick up their cross and follow Him.

This certainly wasn't a "feel good about yourself" message!

It's a "self must be denied" message.

Another Bible passage makes it clearer:

"I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices." (Romans 12:1)

If we stop treating God like a divine gumball machine, we'll get a clearer picture of Who God is, and we'll see that He deserves all of our lives and everything we could ever do.

While the concept of offering ourselves as a living sacrifice sounds tough, it's refreshing to realize that God deserves it.